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KETURAH-COLLINGS.

LADY DESBOROUGH

73, Park Street, W.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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EDITORIAL NOTICE.

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"PRACTICE WITH SCIENCE."

A VERY excellent practice, that ought never to have been allowed to drop, was resumed by the Royal Agricultural Society on Tuesday night. This is to ask distinguished students of the science or practitioners of the art of agriculture to deliver, at fixed periods, short lectures on the subjects of their research or the work they have been doing. Not since 1867 has there been any lecture of this kind delivered to the members. In that year Lord Leicester's agent gave an account of the methods that had been adopted at Holkham to arrest coast erosion. The problem then considered is as actual now as it was forty-four years ago. In fact, the newspapers, on the very day when the lecture was delivered, contained accounts of a storm that had caused the sea to make further and striking inroads on the East Coast. For the purpose of opening the new series of lectures, Professor Biffen of Cambridge was chosen, and no selection could have been happier. Both the man and his topic are specially interesting at the moment. Professor Biffen is a rising and brilliant experimentalist, who at Cambridge has tested recent theories of breeding, with results that promise to confer immeasurable advantage on the theory and practice of agriculture. It happens, too, at the present moment, that public attention has been very strongly directed to wheat, which he chose for the purpose of exemplifying and illustrating the principles of breeding. At

the moment there seems to be every prospect of wheat regaining that supreme importance as a crop which it held till the end of the seventies of last century. Nor is it being studied by the cultivator alone. New interest has been awakened in the mind of the consumer, and it is very certain that wheat will for some time to come be the subject of much discussion.

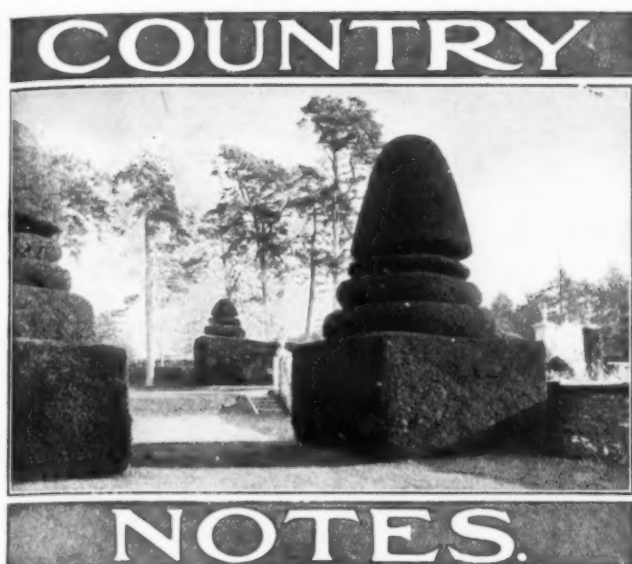
It should be kept in mind, however, that Professor Biffen was not there to enunciate his views on cereals, but to explain the principles of breeding that apply alike to plants and animals. It was of the essence of his teaching that its doctrine could be and was illustrated with equal effectiveness by appealing to wheat and chickens. In the case of a first cross the same thing happens with both of them. Professor Biffen, whose simple lucidity was admirably suitable to his purpose, showed that between scientific breeding and practical breeding there is a considerable, though, in truth, superficial, difference. The practical breeder looks at his plant or animal as a whole; the scientific breeder separates it into various constituents. Thus, in regard to wheat, he takes a characteristic such as chaff, beard, straw, size of berry, and notes the effect of hybridisation on the one that interests him at the moment. For example, he breeds a hybrid which has as one parent a long-husked wheat, and for the other parent one with short husks. In that case the progeny comes out in three different types—each of the parental types and a new intermediate or cross-type between them. The same thing happens with the breeding of chickens, and the blue Andalusian furnished the lecturer with a telling example. It is not our purpose here to follow his simple and satisfactory elucidation of the Mendelian theory, as every agriculturist is already aware of its importance. From the time when Abel was a keeper of sheep, breeding of some kind has been practised, but up to quite recently it has been random in its character. Skilled and unskilled breeders have existed side by side, but the one could not account for his successes, nor the other explain his failures. Made breeds of chickens in many cases represent years and years of patient experiment before the type was fixed, and even now there are many of these breeds that cannot be trusted to breed true.

On the other hand, everyone who has experimented on a large scale has been at times surprised by the suddenness with which a type has become fixed, and often, too, the quickly-made new breed has proved the truest. But this has only been regarded as an unfathomable mystery of Nature. The old explanatory theories were extremely wild and unsatisfactory, and the practical breeder simply resigned himself to the production of a large percentage of misfits and wastrels. No doubt in some cases close observation and great skill enabled a man, who had nothing except a practical knowledge of the subject, to achieve wonderful results. At least, they may be called wonderful, on account of the darkness in which the experimenters had to grope; but if we take into account the fact that for at least two thousand years, and probably more, the breeding of domestic animals has occupied the attention of some of the ablest men of their generation, we cannot consider that the results were anything but meagre. Probably we should find most skill developed in regard to breeding the race-horse, and there is no country in the world in which England is excelled at this art. Yet everybody knows the vast proportion of the misfits to the successes. In a lecture that was much too brief, Professor Biffen pointed out that science was leading the breeder out of this atmosphere of guesswork into one of mathematical precision. He showed that the crossing of types and the production of hybrids is subject to a law as immutable as any of those others governing the processes of Nature. He proved, too, that those laws could be definitely ascertained and acted upon. Though too modest to mention the fact, he has demonstrated their adequacy by the production of new breeds of wheat, and, as a supplement to the lecture he delivered at Bedford Square, a visit to his experimental plots at Cambridge may be heartily recommended. In this way may be applied the well-known motto of the society, which is "Practice with Science."

Our Portrait Illustration.

THE subject of our frontispiece this week is Lady Desborough. Lady Desborough is a daughter of the late Hon. Julian H. C. Fane, son of the eleventh Earl of Westmorland. Her marriage took place in 1887.

. It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



NEVER has the House of Lords listened to the utterance of a more striking and picturesque figure than that of the patriarchal Lord Roberts carrying his eighty years lightly and showing an example of zeal and patriotism that the youngest might emulate. In the country the latest services of Lord Roberts have not been as fully appreciated as they ought to be. It is easy to applaud a soldier for distinguished conduct during a campaign; but the greatness of an agitator's work is not so clearly visible, even when the object of the agitation appeals to every sound and patriotic citizen. Lord Roberts with marvellous assiduity has preached in season and out of season the dangers to which we are exposed by the possession of an inadequate army. His logic is relentless, and ought to be the more convincing because it is exactly the same as that of the German Chancellor.

There is no use in repeating the platitude that the policy of this country is one of peace. Everybody knows it already. But in a world such as we are living in, the defence of a country ought to be commensurate with the material resources it has to defend; and if the Empire is to be a reality and not a mere name, the Mother Country should be in a position not only to repel the invader from her own shores, but to send adequate forces to any part of the King's dominions where they are required. The assurances of Lord Haldane do not satisfy the public mind on this point. His hair-splitting between the phrases "logically possible" and "reasonably probable" is no answer. We all know that he is one of the ablest Ministers in Mr. Asquith's Administration, and are more than ready to give him the credit that is his due for transforming the Volunteer into an effective Territorial system; but there is still much to do, and we trust that the unselfish exhortations of Lord Roberts will stimulate the military authorities to activity.

On the low marsh-fringed shore that stretches from Aldeburgh to Dunwich and beyond it the sea furnishes its own peculiar romance. It is ever encroaching and, for the most part, destroying; but it also makes at times strange revelations. When the fishermen wander along the beach in search of the amber that is occasionally thrown up, they are continually meeting with striking evidence that the waves toss and tumble now over what was once dry land. Remains of forest trees are frequently left on the beach; but only now and then are they accompanied by relics of the goodly towns and buildings that have been overwhelmed. On Monday there was a very high tide and stormy weather which had the effect of washing away vast quantities of sand from the shore near Thorpe.

During the storm a hoard of treasure was unearthed, and full details and descriptions will be eagerly awaited. Hundreds of coins of gold, silver and bronze, which appear to date from the early Saxon times; ancient bronze rings and ornaments, and an old bronze bag-clasp with a silver inscription, which is thought at the moment to date from the time of King John, were brought to light by the waves. We all remember the well-known passage in Tennyson:

There rolls the deep where grew the tree,
O earth, what changes hast thou seen!
There where the long street roars, hath been
The stillness of the central sea.

Truth is stranger than fiction, and no one would have been more interested in this confirmation of what he wrote sixty years ago than the old poet, who used to spend his holidays at Mablethorpe, considerably further north than the particular bit of coast to which we have referred, but resembling it in many of its most striking characteristics.

A very practical and important experiment was described in the paper read at the Farmers' Club on Monday by Professor J. H. Priestley of Bristol. It was conducted by Miss E. J. Dudgeon with the Cooper-Hewitt vapour lamp. The effect, briefly stated, was (as compared with similar plants in the control greenhouse): French beans eight days earlier; carrots, fifteen; cauliflower, twenty; lettuce, six; oats, five; barley, five; wheat, eight. The plants produced were sturdier and more vigorous than those in the ordinary house. Results like these go far to justify the contention that the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries ought to take up this question of the electrification of crops and bring it to a practical issue, so that it may be seriously applied to the cultivation of the land.

Sir Frederick Macmillan has unquestionably placed his finger on a weak spot in the otherwise excellent Copyright Bill presented to Parliament by Mr. Sydney Buxton on Thursday week. The present arrangement is that an author enjoys the benefit of copyright for forty-two years after publication, or seven years after death, whichever may be the longer period. The Bill, with an appearance of making a concession to authors, fixes the period of copyright protection at fifty years from the author's death. But this is practically nullified by the introduction of a qualifying clause. It is proposed that twenty-five years after publication, in case of the author being dead, anyone may obtain the right to reproduce his work by applying to the Controller of Patents for a licence, and complying with such conditions as the Controller may think proper. This is not just to the heirs, who might have very strong objections to allowing a new publisher to produce without consulting them an edition that possibly might come into rivalry with those already in existence. Authors will be grateful to Sir Frederick Macmillan for coming forward to defend their interests. It is bad enough that literature, which is property created by genius, should be confiscated at the end of a term of years. All other goods are subjected to the hereditary principle and handed down from father to son. The man, for instance, who built a mill would be very much astonished if the State proposed to step in at the end of a period and take it from his heirs, on the ground that flour was necessary to the community.

TOM FLUTE.

Poor old Tom Flute
He played so clear
The neighbours said
"Sure, Spring is near!"
They seemed to hear
Her sweet voice in
The woods beginning
To be green;
And the slim pipes
The cherubs blow
When through the fields
They dancing go—
But when they came
To peep and see,
There was Tom Flute
And none but he.

WALTER DE LA MARE.

Dr. Timbrell Bulstrode points a warning finger at other shellfish as well as oysters in the report that he has drawn up for the Local Government Board. It would not be surprising to find that his words have the effect of scaring away those who have been in the habit of eating oysters, mussels and cockles, because he says that as far as proof is possible the conclusion is forced upon him "that numerous outbreaks of enteric fever, of gastro-enteritis, and of obscure intoxication" are to be attributed to the consumption of these shellfish. He suggests that a register should be kept of the sources of supply and also of the wholesale dealers to whom shellfish are sent, so that any shellfish could be traced from the shop at which it was purchased to the source from which it was obtained. In the meantime, and until some such regulation is made, he advises people to see that their mussels are boiled for at least five minutes. Of course, his remedy is open to the objection that it would involve the registration of every itinerant hawker of shellfish and the

keepers of shellfish stalls in the streets, which would be resented by these classes as an interference with the earning of their livelihood.

Much difference of opinion has been generated on the question of the relative prosperity of the Danish and the English farmer; but it would be a great pity to carry this sort of thing too far. The important economical point is in regard to the profit which the Danish farmer makes out of his butter. There can be no question about the advantage of selling milk direct if this can be done. A Danish correspondent suggests that the difference between the value of butter and the value of the fresh milk it takes to make it, is made up by the sale of the skim milk. If that be so, skim milk must be a tolerably dear commodity in Denmark, and at any rate he takes no account of the increased labour involved by butter-making. What we should like to obtain, from some correspondent who knows Denmark well, are the facts which would enable us to find out the exact margin of profit there is in producing factory butter. The items to be taken into consideration are the cost and keep of the cow, the cost of labour, the rent of land and buildings and so on. The statistician who works out the prime cost of a pound of butter will have thrown much light on a difficult problem.

We are just coming to that delightful season of the year in which the song of the nightingale is heard in those favoured places which this bird, of much local partiality, affects. Several efforts have been made to induce it to extend its range, and though these, so far as we have heard, have as yet not met with any permanent success, there seems no reason why they should not do so. Sir John Sinclair, attempting to introduce nightingales into Scotland, proved robins to be excellent foster-parents for the young birds. His method was the simple one of placing the nightingale's eggs in the robin's nest in lieu of the native eggs and letting the natural instincts of the foster-parents do the rest. They did it perfectly. But at the time of the autumnal migration the young nightingales, which had been seen about in full feather and good health up to then, disappeared, and they have never returned. There was, however, a measure of success achieved. Some dire fate may have befallen that brood in their journey across sea. Care should be taken, in all these experiments, to introduce the birds into the right environment. In this case, oak copse of about five to eight feet high would be ideal.

The wonderful doings of Gray at billiards have suggested a new game, a new mode of finding pastime on the table, which consists in marking a circle with the chalk, to indicate the area within which the red ball must lie, after the losing hazard into one or other middle pocket, in order to give easy opportunity for repetition of the stroke. It is said that it was by practice in returning the red to a circle thus marked that Gray originally learned his command of the hazard which is worth so much to him. The mode in vogue now is for one player to see how many times he can achieve the stroke and bring back the red within the circle. On his failure the next player tries to beat him, and so on, and it has the merit of letting in a number of players. Since bridge became popular, interest in billiards in clubs and country houses has diminished almost to the vanishing point. If the table is used at all, it is far more often for "snooker" than for what is sometimes called the "legitimate" game. Probably this game of thus returning the red to the marked circle is hardly to be ranked as "legitimate;" but it has at all events the merit of providing a form of practice which ought to be very useful as an aid to acquiring proficiency in the game itself.

Lord Wolverton is taking principal charge of a big-game show to be exhibited at the Crystal Palace in connection with the Festival of Empire. It is hoped to make this exhibition even more fully representative of the game trophies that have been obtained—unfortunately, it would not be correct to say that they are still to be obtained—within the confines of the British Empire than was the fine collection lately shown at Vienna. It is a pity that the British Columbian heads had just started on their return journey to the West, under the custody of Mr. Warburton Pike, before this idea of the exhibition at the Crystal Palace was fully elaborated. The consequence is that they will have to be brought back a second passage over the ocean. It is reasonable to hope that the display at the Crystal Palace will be even superior, so far as trophies from the British Empire are concerned, because it is scarcely likely that any Briton who was willing to send his heads to Vienna will refuse them to this show at home; but, on the other hand, there are many who may be willing to exhibit in England, for such a special occasion, though they might not have cared to let their trophies go to Austria.

When, if ever, we read in Chaucer of the "sweet showers" of April and reference to that month of spring in which folk long to go on pilgrimages and so on, and contrast that pleasant prospect with the biting winds which often assail us at that time, we are apt to say that "the seasons are changing"; but whether or no that be true, we are also rather apt to forget that the dates as we now know them do not rightly correspond with the dates in vogue at the time when legends of the soft showers of April and the merriness of May had their origin. By the change of "style" all these dates fall twelve days earlier than they used to. In common parlance we generally refer to March as a month of spring, yet the almanack will inform us that officially spring begun only on March 21st. Moreover, Midsummer's Day, which we claim, by its very name, to be midmost of the summer, marks according to the same high authority, only the beginning of that season. Bearing these facts in mind we shall find that our climate is not, after all, so very untrue to the character which has been given it.

COMPARATIVE HORTICULTURE.

Beyond the fence on either side
My neighbours view with swelling pride
The promise of their meads;
Since they have worked while others slept
Already tiny shoots have crept
From subterranean seeds.

But in my plot no shoots appear,
Save those that grow from year to year,
And mind their own affairs;
True friends of man, without whose aid,
Barren our lot who hate the spade
And love our easy chairs.

My neighbours have a lengthy start,
And sorrow rises in my heart
To watch their horrid "side";
But still an agricultural man,
Equipped with rake and seeds and can,
Might humble all their pride.

(Enter a gardener.)

O, gardener, thou shalt make those men
Who scorn my patch, bright green with envy
As they come to view it;
To arms, O Adam, skilled in flowers,
But do not take too many hours
Wherein to do it.

E. S.

The letter from the Rev. Dr. Cox, published in our "Correspondence" columns, reveals a melancholy attitude of mind on the part of certain of the people of Great Baddow. The dangerous condition of the spire is another example of the pernicious habit of allowing ivy to work its will on the fabric of a mediæval building. It may be hoped, however, that our correspondent's gloomy anticipation as to the immediate disappearance of this very characteristic Essex spire will not be fulfilled. We feel sure that the Vicar and churchwardens will realise on reflection how greatly their church will suffer both in its appearance and history if the spire is destroyed, and that Mr. Wykeham Chappellor, the diocesan surveyor, will use his influence to prevent such an act of vandalism. We cannot believe, moreover, that so material an alteration in the fabric will be attempted without first obtaining the necessary faculty. It is obvious that to meet the dangerous condition of the spire some scaffolding or struts should be put up at once; but the hasty demolition of the work on this ground would be simply a counsel of panic.

A few weeks ago mention was made in these notes of the necessity for some organisation of the bonfires which are to be lighted on the night of the Coronation, so that they should all be burning at the same time. In this connection it is interesting to find what are the high places from which news may be transmitted from the Channel to the Border by signal fires. Macaulay's fragment, "The Armada," describes how "From Eddystone to Berwick Bounds, from Lynn to Milford Bay," the sign was sent until "The red glare on Skiddaw roused the Burghers of Carlisle." The shortest chain that could be made would be on the West Coast, by bonfires lighted on Brown Willy in Cornwall, Dunkery Beacon on Exmoor, the Carmarthen Van, Cader Idris, Snowdon, Scafell Pike and the Criffel. From Ben Lomond could probably be seen the Criffel and Ben Nevis, and from Ben Nevis a beacon would shine far into the North.

NOTES ON THE HERON.

EARLY in spring, and before the great majority of wild birds have commenced to nest, one may visit a heronry in the hope of learning something of the domestic habits of its tenants; and in all probability the visitor will not be disappointed, as the birds generally begin their building operations even before the more familiar rooks have shown us in a dozen different ways, that spring has actually arrived, and that the country-side will soon be teeming with its busy feathered couples.

The end of March has seen many herons, regardless of weather, sitting tight on full clutches of their beautiful eggs; snow has often fallen upon their unprotected backs, and a cheerless business indeed it must be sitting among the bare branches at the top of some towering leafless tree. For deciduous trees seem to be preferred, and the birds find a striking contrast in August, when in the glare of the summer sun, far above the cool shelter of the thick foliage below, they work unceasingly to supply the needs of a voracious family. That the heron is extremely prolific is shown by the fact that the bird will rear two broods in a season, though the number of eggs constituting the second clutch is often less than the first, and sometimes they are also smaller in size. Yet, since the bird is shot and trapped wherever it may venture to feed, the species is gradually decreasing in numbers, and the mortality among them, especially during the winter months, must be enormous.

The rook, however, which often nests in trees adjoining the heronry, considers that his duty has been done when, about the end of May, one family only has been reared.

As early as March 19th of last year, a heron's nest, built in a tree containing four others, held a full clutch of five eggs, which were duly hatched, the noisy young ones gaining in weight and strength until they were able to follow their parents to the distant marshes, where in due course they learned to fend for themselves.

On July 23rd the same nest contained a second clutch of two young and one bad egg, which were lying upon clean black twigs in the centre of the nest, though the edges and surrounding branches were white with the excrement of the first and recently-departed family. The young had already assumed



CLAMOROUS, BRIGHT-EYED NESTLINGS.

mendously strong grip of their long feet; but in spite of these attributes they would occasionally sway and flap their great wings to regain lost balance; still, on the whole, they managed to look quite comfortable, though very suspicious of the camera, upon which they kept a watchful eye.

It is a wonderful provision of Nature that the heron's eyes are so placed that the bird, with the beak held horizontally to the ground, is able to look at any object immediately below it, and the enormous advantage of this faculty no doubt accounts to some extent for the bird's fame as a fisher.

As I was manipulating the camera in order to obtain the accompanying photographs, the birds occupying the other trees in the heronry were resuming their domestic duties, and the noise made by the various hungry families as they received food was simply appalling. They seemed to be imitating motor-cars, cats mewing, peacocks crying, pigs squealing, etc., indeed a marvelous cacophony, the noise commencing the moment the old bird approached with its cargo of eels or fish from the marshes, and not ceasing until all had been distributed. The two young ones figuring in the illustration were making so much noise that they and the old one failed to hear the rather noisy shutter of the camera when the photograph was



C. W. R. Knight.

A FIRST SURVEY.

Copyright.



C. W. R. Knight.

IN THEIR LOFTY CRADLE.

Copyright.

taken. This photograph, by the way, was secured after a wait of four hours, the approach of the eel-laden parent being heralded by a loud "honk," which immediately set the young ones screaming.

As the camera was being taken down one of these young herons ejected a good-sized eel, which slithered down out of sight among the branches and landed with a "flop" on the earth below. Upon examination later this eel proved to have been partially digested, and probably would have weighed about one-half to three-quarters of a pound. Another eel thrown up in the same way was seen to have been left hanging over the edge of the nest; and it seems that, when old enough to appreciate danger, young herons invariably bring up and eject any



C. W. R. Knight.

AWAITING THE FOOD-BRINGER.

Copyright.

food which they may have recently swallowed. They are, no doubt, prompted by that instinct which so materially helps the mature birds when attacked by a bird of prey, namely, to lighten themselves as much as possible, though often, as in this case, the young birds are unable to fly, and, consequently, lose their meal, to no advantage.

Young herons in the nest, like the majority of birds, maintain, in spite of their filthy surroundings, a state of perfect cleanliness, each feather being delightfully clean and dry. It is very instructive to compare the heron in its wild state with a bird that has been for some time in the captivity of a cage. Its former cleanliness has given place to a state of filth that would hardly be believed by any one who has seen the bird in its natural home.

The young birds had left the nest on August 22nd and were sitting on a branch some distance away. Doubtless they soon found their way to some remote marsh, and one hopes that they have not shared the fate of so many of their unfortunate relations.

G. W. R.

AGRICULTURAL NOTES.

A WARNING ABOUT ARTIFICIAL MANURES.

A MOST practical and useful leaflet has been issued from the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries concerning the sale of low-quality manures at excessive prices. Those who are engaged in the cultivation of the land cannot afford to neglect it. What the writer says is that sellers of cheap and bad manures calculate on the ignorance of those to whom they sell. In their advertisements and invoices they give a correct analysis of the constituents, in the confidence that the country people will not be able to say how poor this analysis is. The example that they give is that of a firm which offers "A complete fertiliser in the cheapest form" at 70s. a ton. The analysis accompanying this so-called fertiliser is: Nitrogen, 1·23 per cent.; soluble phosphates, 5 per cent.; insoluble phosphates, 1·5 per cent. Three other manures are referred to as being offered at the same price, and containing respectively, according to the invoice: (2) Nitrogen, 1·15 per cent. (equal to ammonia, 1·40 per cent.), and phosphates, 7 per cent.; (3) nitrogen equal to ammonia, 1·40 per cent., and phosphates, 8 per cent.; (4) nitrogen, 1 per cent. to 1·25 per cent. and phosphates 6 per cent. to 7 per cent. The writer proceeds to show that the quantities of nitrogen and phosphates in the four manures referred to could have been purchased in nitrate of soda, superphosphate of lime and basic slag, on the basis of the unit values issued in one of the previous leaflets. We need not follow his calculation; but the result is that in number one he shows that the real value was 26s.; number two, 21s. 6d.; number three, 22s. 8d.; and number four, 18s. 7d. to 22s. 8d. It will be seen that the farmer paid two and a-half times at least what he should have done—that is, supposing that first-rate materials were used, like nitrate of soda, superphosphate and basic slag. But if the nitrogen had been derived from organic substances, as, for example, a low-grade shoddy, and the phosphates from rock phosphates, the manures could have been compounded at a still smaller cost, the figures for the four being respectively: Number one, 18s. 5d.; number two, 12s. 2d.; number three, 12s. 11d.; number four, 10s. 6d. to 12s. 9d. Now this does not at all cover the whole loss to the farmer. It is true that he has paid £3 10s. for what is worth only 19s. to 26s., and may be worth no more than 10s. 6d. to 18s. 5d. That is bad enough; but it is worse still that this weak manure is in many cases of no use at all in the soil, and as it fails in the soil the whole of the purchase-money is utterly and completely wasted. In a recent action in Scotland, where a farmer purchased a manure and it was found to be not reasonably fit for the purpose for which it was purchased, it was held that not only was the purchaser not liable to pay the price of the manure, but he

was awarded damages for loss due to failure of the crop. Another form of deception practised by the less worthy merchants of artificial manure is to pretend that the nitrogen is of more value because it is of animal origin or derived from organic matter. The farmer will take these three constituents into consideration in arriving at the value of artificial manures, namely, nitrogen, phosphates and potash. These are the constituents that artificial manure ought to supply to the crop, and its value in any other direction is only put forward as a means of effecting a sale. At this time of day nearly every farmer uses a certain amount of artificial manure, and it is practically certain that he will have to do this more than ever in the future, since the substitution of mechanical for horse power in the streets is seriously diminishing the town supply. Many farmers accustomed to make liberal use of the city consignments now complain that there is great difficulty in getting as much as they want.

LIGHT HORSES.

THE great amount of attention paid to the Shire and Clydesdale breeds of horses during the last half or three-quarters of a century has been, doubtless, very beneficial in many ways to these breeds and to the respective breeders. But there has been one unfortunate result—breeds or types of active, light-legged horses, which at one time were common, have been squeezed out of existence. A case in point is the Vardy breed, which flourished greatly in Northumberland during the early part of last century. As late as the forties whole studs of these excellent horses existed on farms in Northumberland, but the Clydesdale killed them. The fashion for bigger and heavier horses grew apace, and with its growth the old Vardy gradually died away. The blood, however, hung on tenaciously here and there, and as late as twenty years ago odd mares were to be heard of which not only boasted a Vardy ancestry, but showed many of the characteristics of the breed. Indeed, even now dashes of that blood may still be heard of; and where it can be laid claim to, it is advertised. But, of course, it is diluted with cross upon cross of Clydesdale, and exists mostly on paper. The origin of the breed has never been clearly determined hitherto, so far as I am aware, and for present purposes we need not enquire into it. It is sufficient to say that the Vardy spread rapidly over the north part of the country from the beginning of the last century, and was found on all, or nearly all, of the lighter land farms in the country. The Vardy was essentially a farm-horse, but it was equally handy for the farmer's gig. It had "clean" legs, not, however, devoid of hair, fine flat bones and splendid feet. The ribs were well sprung, the neck arching, head neat, ears short. These horses were noted for good health and soundness—a "horse-doctor" was rarely needed—they were as hard as nails, active, tough and wiry, and of magnificent courage, and it was no uncommon thing to find them in full work at twenty-five years of age. A horse of twenty was not old. In every particular, except that of weight, they were far superior to the Clydesdales, which took their place, and one wonders what the North-Country breeders were thinking about when they allowed the blood to leak away. Vardys would have brought money nowadays, and Lord Haldane would have required to look no further for mares to raise his Artillery horses. I sometimes wonder whether it would not be possible to gather up some of the very few remaining traces of the breed and work up again to the original stamp. It would be difficult, no doubt, and probably impossible; but if I were a millionaire I would try it. The Clydesdale altered the conformation more readily than it affected the character. It would be of no use looking now for the Vardy form, but the constitution, the courage, the invincible spirit—these may in some measure remain. J. C.



C. W. R. Knight. AFTER THE FIRST FLIGHT.

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THE BOAT RACE.

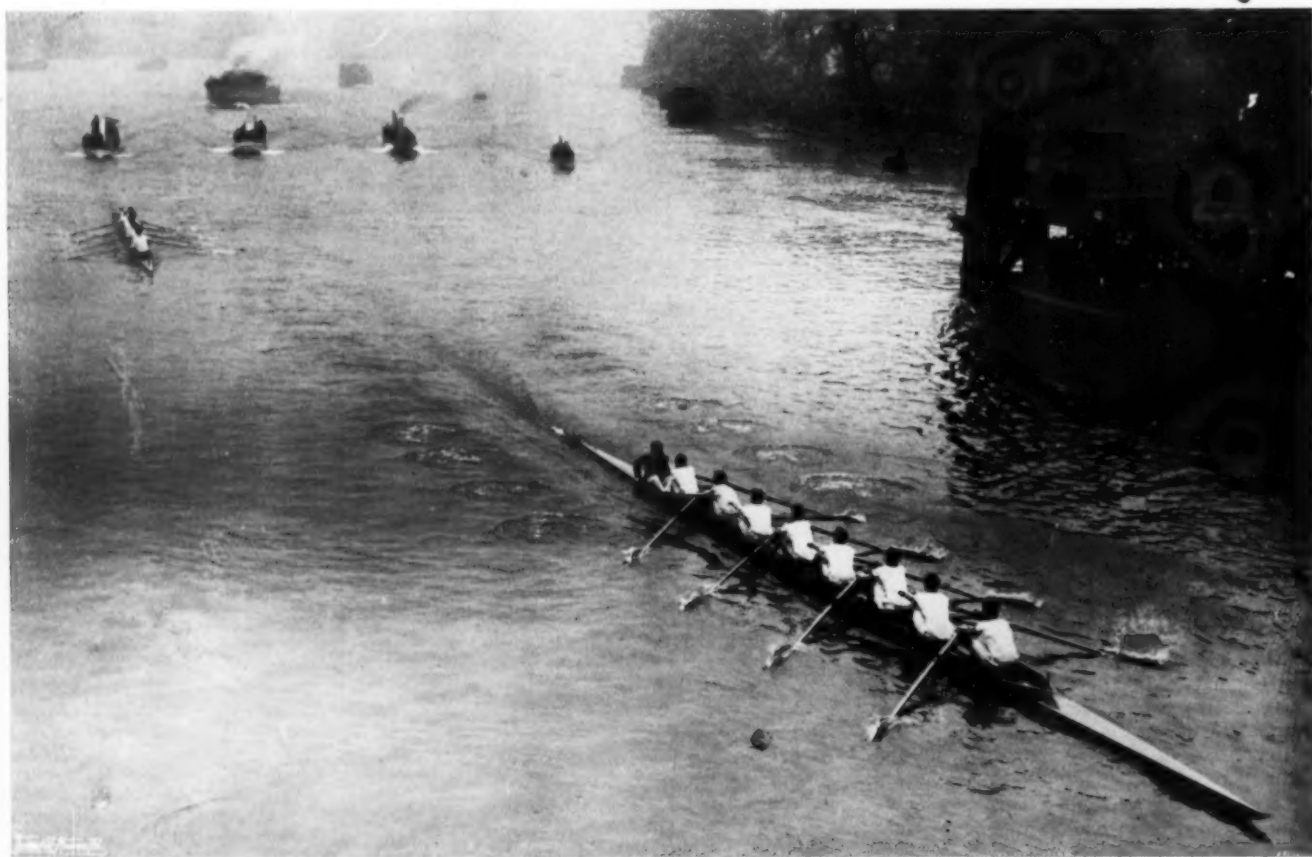


THE FIRST STROKE.

DAY broke grey and misty on Saturday, April 1st, with scarcely a breath of wind stirring; but as the sun rose higher a gentle breeze got up from the north-west. The conditions later on were almost identical with those of last year. About 1 p.m. the air was still rather thick, and even across the breadth of the river objects lost all sharpness of outline. But better things were to come: suddenly the mists parted and the sun shone out. The wind, which had just been a head one down the first reach from Putney to the mile-post, suddenly veered round, and twenty minutes later was almost following.

About 2.15 p.m., Cambridge, as the challengers, launched their boat and paddled to the start. Attention was rather taken off the boat by the news that an aeroplane was flying

over the river, and immediately a biplane carrying two men appeared, quickly followed by a second from the direction of Mortlake. These two had no sooner turned and headed up the river when a monoplane appeared from the other direction. While the race was in progress there were four aeroplanes in the air together, and these, together with a balloon, which crossed the river somewhat earlier, proved quite a counter-attraction to the race itself. Cambridge had not been more than a few minutes at their stake-boat when Oxford appeared, and, having turned, drifted down and took up their position. Unfortunately, the extra weight of the eight caused the stake-boat to drag its anchor. Oxford, therefore, had to turn round, paddle down against the tide and return to the stake-boat, which had again taken up its proper position.



OXFORD HALF-A-LENGTH CLEAR.

As soon as all were ready, no time was lost in getting them off the mark. Cambridge took the water at a slower stroke than Oxford, rowing 10, 9, 8 and 8 in the four quarters of the minute to Oxford's 11, 10, 10 and 9. At the end of a minute Oxford led by a few feet, and then settled down to a slower stroke; but Cambridge, who were now rowing slightly the faster stroke, gained ground, and at Beverley Brook led by a bow canvas. This advantage was not held for long, as Mr. Bourne immediately spurted and made up the difference. Mr. Skinner here steered magnificently and with great judgment. Seeing Oxford were a little wide, he pushed them out still further and took Cambridge into the full flow of the tide. Last year, it will be remembered, he did a feat of "coxing" which had never been done before. Cambridge were leading slightly, and so, instead of going wide round the bend, he deliberately cut the corner across the mud flats, which, however, are deeply covered at high tide. He gained enormously in distance, as the result showed, though losing a good deal of tide. It was expected that he would now do the same, but, like all good generals, he saw the right move at the right moment and acted accordingly. He took the course this year which was taken by the Oxford cox last year; going wide round the bend, he pushed Mr. Wells as much as possible out of the tide on the outside of the corner. When both boats had rounded the corner they were still racing dead level, but Mr. Arbutnot was setting slightly the faster stroke. From this point Oxford began to draw away, and when Mr. Bourne spurted opposite Harrods' led by a full length. Cambridge replied gallantly, but with little effect, and the race was

now over as far as actual racing was concerned. From here till the finish Oxford slowly increased their lead, though Cambridge made several fine efforts to win back the distance they had lost.

Oxford shot Hammersmith half a length clear of Cambridge, but Mr. Wells did not take his opponents' water till some time later. Mr. Skinner steered very cleverly for the remainder of the course, always just managing to evade the wash of the Oxford boat. Between Hammersmith and Barnes Oxford gained a length, shooting Barnes a length and a-half ahead. The winning-post was passed with Oxford leading by a little over one and a-half lengths of daylight.

The race was peculiar in that, though Oxford gained a substantial lead so early, yet the distance ahead that they

finished was not comparatively very much. When one remembers that the boats had raced 18½ min. and covered some four and a-half miles, a win of two and a-half lengths does not mean so much as appears at first sight. Whether Oxford could have won by more it is, of course, impossible to say. They were certainly going all out at the stroke, and had Mr. Bourne tried to set a faster one, who knows but that the final result would not have been less to their advantage, since it might have upset their rhythm and caused them to lose their form.

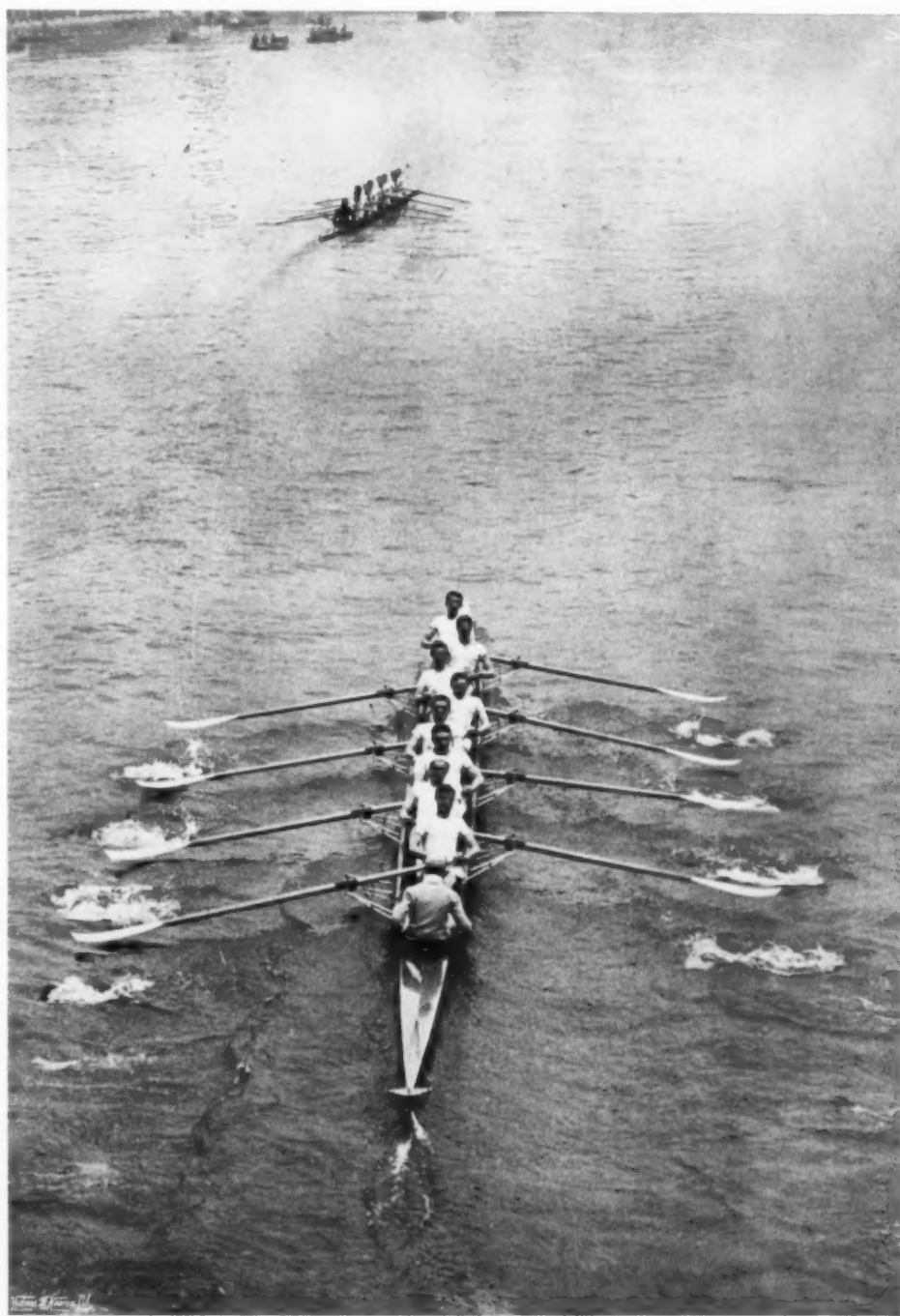
The time, 18 min. 29 sec., creates a new race record for the course, though the 1909 Oxford crew did 18 min. 21 sec. in practice. Both victor and vanquished finished inside the time of 18 min.

47 sec., which was the record for the course held by the Cambridge crew of 1900, and unbeaten till last year. Though Oxford were decidedly a good boat, yet they were by no means an outstanding boat, and they were very lucky to have rowed the race on a tide which was the best that there had been for two years, and probably the best that a race has ever been rowed on. It is very hard to compare the winning and the losing crews in any race, but the time in the Oxford boat was better all through than that in the Cambridge boat. It would be invidious to name and pick out men in either boat as good or bad where all rowed with immense pluck and where each man did his best, which is all that any man can do.

In the Oxford boat the Old Blues enhanced their reputations, and the new ones made theirs. In the losing boat Arbutnot stroked gamely, and no one could have done better than he did. Whatever unjust, ignorant and unkind criticisms

have been levelled against him were thoroughly disproved by the way in which he brought in his crew to the finish. Bourne accurately gauged the measure of the Cambridge boat from the very start, and made the pace too hot for them from the first stroke. Cambridge's hopes of getting a good lead in the first three minutes were dashed to the ground; in fact, they hardly rowed a fast enough stroke in the first two minutes to take much off a crew which was not racing for the lead, much less off one that most certainly was. Bourne's manœuvre rather threw Cambridge out of their stride, since instead of getting a lead they had to force the pace to keep level.

The distance from the start to Hammersmith was accomplished in 7 min. 11 sec., which is very fast indeed. The record



CAMBRIDGE BEHIND OXFORD AT BARNES.

between bridges, which is held by the Cambridge crew of 1909, is 7min. 10sec. It must be remembered, nevertheless, that this record was done by a crew rowing from Putney Bridge to Hammersmith and no further, while in this case it was done by a crew which had yet three miles to go, but which had started about three lengths short of Putney Bridge. The rate of stroke was high in both boats up to Harrods', Cambridge

weight which Mr. Rosher equalled last year. It is generally said that no man can pull his weight who is over 13st. odd. This could by no means be said of Mr. Rosher, who rowed a huge blade from start to finish, but it is a rarity to find a man of 14st. 6lb. who does not owe some of it to fat. This weight is only what it should be for a well-built man of Mr. Rosher's proportions, while the ease and quickness of his movement



AN AEROPLANE AT THE FINISH.

averaging thirty-five to Oxford's thirty-three. Above Hammersmith up to Barnes the stroke in both boats ranged from twenty-nine to thirty-one per minute, but quickened up to thirty-six at the finish.

Mr. Rosher beat the previous record for weight by 3lb. The heaviest man who had ever rowed up till this year was Mr. Kittermaster, who rowed for Oxford in 1900 at 14st. 6lb., a

soon assured one that in training down from over 15st. he had lost all superfluous flesh.

The following are the times taken by Oxford to reach the different landmarks: Mile-post, 4min.; Hammersmith Bridge, 7min. 11sec.; Chiswick Church, 11min. 19sec.; Barnes Bridge, 15min. 21sec.; winning-post, Mortlake, 18min. 29sec.

H. J. SHIELDS.



TALES OF COUNTRY LIFE.

THE WORD OF POWER.

BY

J. E. M. BARLOW.



THE Fury rises in a wild and lovely spot in the mountains, beloved of grouse and grown with heather. Passing the

Three Graves, the mystery of which remains impenetrable throughout the ages, it hurries on its winding way to Clogher, where, running under the bridge on the Augher Road, it changes its name and its nature and becomes the Blackwater. The transformation is as striking as that in the character of a wild young man who passes through a sobering crisis in his life, from which he emerges having lost his reckless dash and enthusiasm and half his charm in the eyes of the world, though he has doubtless gained in depth and judgment.

The Blackwater, however, has nothing to do with the story. Once upon a time the Fury must have been a larger river. Its beautiful rocky bed would easily contain treble the volume of water that can be produced now by the river at its best, and in dry weather it is a ridiculous little thread of a stream that finds its way through the picturesque grey stones. Nevertheless, like many small people, the Fury knows how to make the most of itself. It creates a thousand charming pictures on its downward course. It has more bridges than many a river twice as important, and near one of them there is a labourer's cottage belonging to the Mulvaney's, Bridget and Ann, as hard-working and respectable old women as any in Ireland, and their brother Michael, a feckless gomeril who never did a hand's turn when it could possibly be avoided.

He was many years younger than his sisters, and the only excuse for his appalling laziness was that they had spoilt him hopelessly, a fact which they must often have regretted, for he certainly did them small credit.

Bridget kept the house, cooked and cleaned and gardened, and did the needlework and washing of the household, while Ann earned good wages up at Clogher Park, where she worked for Mr. Porter. Digging, weeding, haymaking, gathering strawberries, currants, apples, plums, in season, Ann was, as Mr. Porter declared, equal to many a man and better than most. Punctual to the moment she would appear in her flapping sun-bonnet, red jacket and old short skirt, and she toiled with unrelenting energy until the last labourer set out for home. Michael, meanwhile, spent much of his time seated on the low wall of the bridge where the lane leading to the chapel strikes off the Fury Road. This was his favourite resort, especially on a market-day, when quite a fair number of country people would be passing on their way to Clogher. It was on one of these occasions that he was joined by a grey-headed old fellow with a great gift of the gab.

"Gran' weather we're havin'," said he.

"Gran' weather entoiely," agreed Michael, encouragingly.

"That's a fine place up yonder," said the stranger, nodding towards Clogher Park.

"'Tis that for a fact," said Michael.

"Good timber," commented the old man, "an' the lie o' the lan' takes me fancy. All ups an' downs loike the ways o' man's loife. Manny's the ups I've had, but 'tis downhill wid me now to the end of me days."

"Well, well!" said Michael, consolingly. "'Tis aisy dhroppin' downhill, an' maybe ye'll be no grate while gettin' to the bottom!"

The old man shook his head. "Have ye e'er a screw o' tobaccy?" said he, with his eye on a bulge in Michael's pocket. Michael investigated the bulge, and produced material sufficient for the filling of a pipe, which was duly lighted and set going before the old fellow resumed the conversation.

"Aye!" said he. "'Tis terrible aisy rollin' downhill, but for a strong young blade loike yerself ye'd be keapin' an

eye on the top of it. Ye've yer hid full o' plans for the future, I'll go bail."

"Sorra a plan," said Michael, cheerfully. "I'm doin' well enough where I am, an' I've no special wakeness for climbin'."

"Wirra, wirra!" sighed his strange acquaintance. "What wud I give for the youth an' the strength of ye! not to name the opportunity that lies at yer door! Man, have ye ne'er a grain of ambition? Are ye contint to bide poor when ye might be rich, empty when ye might be as full as an egg? Wud ye choose to be sober whin ye might be merry?"

"Bedad!" said Michael, touched by this last suggestion. "Bedad! I wud not. 'Tis meself is as dhry as Saturday's loaf this minit."

"An' to think," said the old man, regretfully, "that wid as much enterprise as wud lift a snail to the top of a stone wall ye might dhrown yerself in dhrink every night o' yer loife an' stan' trate to a dozen thirsty souls besides."

Michael stared with admiration at the painter of such a gorgeous picture. "Bedad!" said he, "there's maybe a sparrk of enterprise in me after all, if I'd a notion how to bring such things to pass."

The old man eyed him shrewdly. "It's a quare thing," said he, "that Mr. Porter has done no diggin' on Castle Hill." Michael looked disappointed.

"Is it buried treasure ye're thinkin' of?" said he, without enthusiasm. "Who'd be diggin' in a place as gentle as that is? Sure! the Hill is swarmin' wid spectres an' gobbins. The Shee has guarded wid throops an' rigimins of them as is best let alone."

"Blathers!" said his friend, scornfully. "If I was a score o' years younger I'd soon show ye what a man cud do wid a stout heart in his body an' a stout spade in his han's. Arrah! whin I think o' the gold an' the jewels lyin' hid in the earth up yonder it makes me mad to be naught but a poor old dodderer wid one fut in the grave."

"But," said Michael, dubiously, "supposin' a man was to find somethin' there, wudn't it be the property of himself up yonder?"

"No more than the wee bits o' rabbits that rides home in yer pockets on a moonlight night, or the throuties ye take from the river. Findin's keepin's a sayin' as old as Beelzebub."

Michael looked uneasy. This stranger showed an unaccountable knowledge of his ways and doings.

"There's a good bit o' groun' to go over," he objected. "An' maybe to find nothin' so grate after all. If a man had a notion where to dig—"

"Where there's a will there's a way," said the old man, "an' if there's treasure to be found, I can tell ye for certain, 'tis yerself is the man to find it."

And with this he took his leave, shouldered his bundle and trudged away down by the Fury River, Michael staring after him until he disappeared round a bend of the road.

"If the treasure's to be foun' by me," said he, "I'd a right to start the search widout too much delayin'. For as young as he thought me, I'm risin' forty, an' 'twill be no grate while before I'm over the top o' the hill!"

From that moment the man was obsessed by the idea, and the third night after the encounter he had a strange dream bearing on the subject. He dreamt that he was crossing the old Deer Park with a brace of rabbits in his hand, when he was hailed by a voice that made the blood curdle in his veins, and standing under an old thorn tree he beheld a wee man, from top to toe of the colour of the lichen on the bark of an old tree. Green-grey he was, with eyes like blazing coals in his head, and a beard an ell long.

"Michael Mulvaney," said he. "The hour draws nigh for the findin' of the hidden treasure on Castle Hill. Next Frida' will be the thirteenth day of the thirteenth month from last New Year's Day, an' 'tis you are the man whose name begins wid the thirteenth letter of the alphabet. Go up afther midnight climbin' wid yer face set East, an' wait under the tree that bears the sign of the risin' sun till the Cathaydral clock strikes thirteen, which it will surely do that night. When the last stroke is told, turn yerself roun', goin' widdershins, for thirteen times an' take thirteen steps downhill. Dig then wid the stoutest spade in yer possession, an' continue to dig till ye strike iron. An' what ye shall find carry home on yer back. Wid the word I shall give ye the treasure shall be unsealed."

The little man then whispered in his ear a word which may not be set down, a word of dread, a word of mystery and power; and with that he melted into the night and was gone.

Friday night was black as a funeral pall, and Michael took with him a dark lantern, and set off in fear and trembling. Climbing the boundary wall of the demesne near old Gordon's cottage, he crossed the silent fields, passed by the Bishop's walk, and rounding the pond, where he disturbed the water-fowl, which screamed at his approach, made his way up through Lady Robert's grove to Castle Hill.

Never had it appeared more sinister, and for the moment his heart misgave him and he was on the point of retracing his steps. Fate drove him on. He mounted the hill and, posting himself under the appointed tree, awaited the striking of the Cathedral clock.

Great beads of perspiration stood out on his forehead as at last the solemn strokes rang out deliberately, and on the last, and thirteenth, he began to turn himself round according to the directions. With a reeling brain he took the thirteen paces downhill and began to dig as one possessed. In his whole life Michael Mulvaney had never done such a piece of hard labour. The sweat streamed from him; he worked as a man might work to escape death, and at length the spade struck iron, and a curiously-shaped chest was revealed.

Taking a rope from his pocket, Michael heaved it on to his back and staggered away on his homeward journey. It seemed to him that his burden grew in weight with every step he took, and by the time he reached the door of his own cottage he was utterly exhausted, and, pushing the box into a dark corner, he fell upon his bed in a sort of swoon, which gradually turned into a heavy sleep.

When he regained consciousness, Ann and Bridget were moving in the kitchen. He sat up in a state of bewilderment, but it was by no means the first time that he had found himself fully clothed and lying on the outside of the bed on waking after a night's adventure. His head ached, his bones and muscles were strained, and by degrees he remembered vaguely what had befallen him, and, creeping cautiously across the room, he found the strange-looking oblong box which stood to prove that the affair had been no dream, but a genuine happening.

He examined it closely, but could find no way of opening it. And then it occurred to him that he had forgotten the Word of Power revealed by the wee man at their interview in the Deer Park. He racked his brain without result, and when his sisters had left the house—Ann to do her day's work at the Park, and Bridget to market in Clogher—he seized the chance to try every possible means of opening the box by force, producing, however, no visible result.

"The sorry blunderer I am," muttered he that night as he crept into bed a haggard and disappointed man. "I'm good for nothin' but to be fed an' tended by two old women."

His sins of omission lay heavy upon him at that moment. Ann had come in tired and cross, and had reproached him in no measured terms for his indolence and for the general irregularity of his conduct, and her words stung the more sharply on account of his present dejection. Sleep came to him almost as his head touched the pillow, and he presently passed into the land of dreams, where once again he met with the strange little man of the Deer Park.

"Once more," said he, "will I reveal the word. If by your carelessness it is lost again, it is for good."

And Michael woke with the word on his tongue. The faint light of morning showed through the tiny windows, close shut to exclude every breath of wholesome air, and, hurrying to where the chest lay in the shadows, the man gave utterance to the mystic syllables. The lid flew back and a volume of grey smoke poured into the room, almost stifling Michael with its sulphurous fumes.

Forming itself first into a column, it finally assumed the shape of a man in a loose, flowing garment, his head bowed upon his breast, his hand spread in a peculiar gesture as of salutation. Michael, at the same time, became aware of another presence which had materialised and was standing in the doorway, and

in the second figure he recognised his first acquaintance on the Bridge and his friend of the Deer Park, perceiving for the first time that these two were one and the same person.

"Centuries have passed, and tens of centuries," said the presence in the doorway, "since Kophet walked the world a High Priest of the Sun. When, for shameful abuse of the powers that were his, he was immured in a casket of metal, sealed with the sacred Word and buried under the earth, it was agreed that there should be given him this one opportunity of working out his own salvation. The hour is struck, the man is here. Seven years, O Kophet, shall he serve you. Of this fool create a man, of this failure a success, and the expiation shall be accepted."

The Priest of the Sun prostrated himself, touching the earth with his forehead in the manner of the Orientals, and when he lifted himself up, he and Michael were alone in the room.

The light strengthened, the sun rose; but when Bridget came to summon her brother to breakfast she found neither sight nor sign of him; and from that day forth for seven long years Michael was no more seen in Clogher.

Great was the consternation when his sisters realised that Michael's disappearance was a thing to be counted neither by hours nor by days, nor even by weeks. Indeed, the concern of the whole neighbourhood was out of all proportion to the general appreciation of his value as a citizen. Search was made for miles around, but he had, as they said, "gone, clean an' clever"—though not without leaving a clue, had they known how to follow it, in the shape of the old metal box lying unheeded in a dark corner of his room.

To Bridget came the first revelation concerning him. It happened one evening, when she had "set the tay" to await Ann's return from her labours, and was sitting wearily by the hearth, the slow tears trickling miserably down the deep channels they had worn in her kind old face, as she thought of the lad who had been her "white-headed boy" through all the wasted years of his idle existence.

"'Tis meself is to blame," said she, addressing the lean and sporting mongrel, who looked up into her face with his continual questioning as to what had become of his master. "Had I learned him his duties he'd have come to no harm. I was ower soft wid him, an' that's the truth of it."

"Happen, honey," said a voice behind her, "there'll be no great harm done."

Turning hastily, she found that a man had come in, a grey-headed stranger, who stood fingering his pipe and looking as though it were the most natural thing in the world for him to have walked into another person's cottage without the ceremony of knocking, or even, as it appeared, without having taken the trouble to open the door. The dog shivered and retreated, whining, to the furthest corner of the kitchen.

"What's that ye're sayin'?" said Bridget, staring in confusion.

"There's no need to be frettin', Alannah," said the stranger, in a soft, friendly tone. "He's wid those who knows what's best for him. He'll grow an' he'll prosper, an' in seven years' time he'll be back in Clogher an' ye'll find ye've a man to yer brother, an' not a poor gommerel who will sit on the wall from dawn to dusk wid never a stretch in him."

"Have ye seen him?" cried Bridget, advancing upon him. "Where is he at all?"

The strange man waved her off.

"Be aisy," said he, "an' when ye're seekin' news of him, seek it in the old coffer under his bed. I'll give ye the word which will open it the thirteenth day of ivery month, an' there ye'll find all that's to be told concernin' him. He's in good hands. Rest yer heart an' keep a still tongue."

Raising the pipe to his lips, he drew in a long whiff, which he blew out in a cloud so thick that Bridget involuntarily closed her eyes, and when she opened them the cottage was empty and the dog crept out of the corner with his tail between his legs.

"Preserve us!" cried Bridget, and hurried to the door that she might at least see in which direction her visitor had gone. But the only soul to be seen upon the Fury Road was Ann in her old red jacket and her flapping sun-bonnet, and when Bridget related to her her experience, she was more than half inclined to put it down to a dream.

There came a day, however, when Ann was effectually convinced. For, on the morning of the thirteenth of the next month, Bridget woke at dawn, sprang out of bed like a girl of sixteen, and flew into Michael's room. Dragging the coffer from its hiding-place, she uttered a word which Ann had never heard, and which she, herself, forgot as soon as she had given it utterance. The lid of the box opened, and, peering in, the old women found a small packet of money with a rough script

in Michael's own unmistakable hand-writing. "I'm doin' grand. I've me ups an' me downs, but I'll win through. Spind the money; I'll be makin' more. Michael."

With tears in their eyes his sisters read the message; with trembling fingers they counted out the coins.

"'Tis some sort of foreign money," said Ann; "we'll be showin' it to His Honour." And it turned out to be coinage of the Argentine Republic.

From that time forth the coffer was kept in a place of honour, and on the thirteenth morning of every month Bridget opened it with the Word of Power to get news of Michael and money sufficient to deprive the Old Age Pension of all meaning in her eyes.

"We'll not be spakin' of it," said Bridget, "less said, better sped," and, excepting Mr. Porter, they took no one into their confidence; but they confidently counted the days to Michael's return.

Seven years from the time of the finding of the treasure on Castle Hill came a passenger on the Clogher Valley Line, in that queer little train that seems specially built for a journey through Wonderland; a grave, strong man, with purpose in his eyes and lines of thought upon his brow; a man who had toiled and who had suffered and who had learnt of those things that are well worth the knowing.

It was dark when he alighted at the Clogher Station, but he knew his way without borrowing a light. His heart swelled when he heard the voice of the Fury River, dear to him now as the voice of a mother to her son returning from exile.

He followed the winding road until he came to the lights in the cottage windows that Bridget never lit without a prayer for his safe return.

A knock at the door.

"Come yer ways in," said Bridget's voice, and Michael found his way back to all the joys of Home.

His sisters were never tired of wondering at him, and his arrival was a nine days' wonder in the village; but although he gave some account of his experiences, and of the strivings and difficulties that had beset him upon his sojournings in the strange country, he was inclined to be reticent, and his only explanation of his sudden departure was that he had had "some quare kind of dream."

The Word of Power faded from memory, the coffer remained closed from the day of his return, nor was any more seen of the Priest of the Sun or of the Stranger to whom he had owed his release. The expiation was complete, and Michael had grown from the littleness of a fool to the height of a man, and his sisters were proud and happy women to the end of their days.

IN THE GARDEN.

WINTER EFFECTS AT BELTON, LINCOLNSHIRE.

BY GERTRUDE JEKYLL.

IT is no small pleasure in the winter months to be able to enjoy beautiful pictures of colour effect in woodland or by water. But where there is space and where there is right knowledge, such living pictures may be made, and perhaps all the better because the number of the plants that can be used is not large. More than half the summer gardens are spoilt by the indiscriminate employment of material of too many different kinds and colours. There are so many delightful flowering plants, all seeming to claim notice, that, unless the garden's owner has some of the feeling and training of an artist

he is bewildered, tries to use too much, and so actually wastes, on one ineffectual muddle, what in wiser hands might serve to make four or five beautiful pictures. A great French painter has said, "*La peinture, c'est l'art des sacrifices*"—a precious maxim for gardeners. Therefore, the few kinds of plants and shrubs that can be trusted for winter effect are, so far, the better in unskilled hands by reason of their fewness; while, as at Belton, in those of an owner whose distinguished taste ranks high in the world of fine art, these few are used with consummate skill. A large mass of crimson-barked Dogwood fringes the lake to the right of a well-designed tea-house, which, with its wide wooden balcony, juts out into the lake. The Dogwood is planted thickly—the mass is some eighty feet long by twenty



WINTER ACONITE AND SNOWDROPS IN FEBRUARY.



SNOWDROPS IN THE BELTON GARDENS (FEBRUARY).

feet wide up the sloping bank, the rise of the ground at the back helping the solid appearance of the thicket of ruddy stems. Such another mass is planted on a promontory on the opposite side of the lake, so that, looking either way, the eye is pleased and comforted by the warm mass of thriving vegetation. Large Beeches and other trees make a background to the Dogwood picture; while, entering these near, wooded spaces, in ground partly cleared among large tree stems, are some flower scenes of extraordinary beauty—sheets of clear bright yellow and sheets of tufted and starry white. First to bloom, the Winter Aconite (*Eranthis hyemalis*), coming in January and brilliant all through February and well into March—seeding itself freely and growing close up to the stems of trees—even of Beeches, whose shade is notoriously unwelcome to most forms of vegetation. The white is of Snowdrops—Snowdrops in sheets, in tufts, in nebulae, in constellations. The two colours are fairly distinct, and yet follow and combine and a little interweave, for Lord Brownlow's planting is that of a master hand. Such planting is the very best wild gardening, a kind of gardening much misunderstood and often so done as only to spoil wild ground. For not only must the right plants be chosen, but they must be placed in the right way. Many a place is spoiled by well-intended but badly-executed wild gardening, the worst examples being of plants in stiff blocks or exactly regular sequences. Even if the flowers, in their drifts or masses, do not follow the natural swing of the ground, there may be a feeling of want of harmony, if not of actual discord—something jerky or jolting in shape—for in such planting a keenly perceptive sense of form is as essential as a sense of colour.

THE STRIPED SQUILL.

IT is difficult to understand why the charming little striped Squill known to botanists by the name of *Puschkinia scilloides* or *P. libanotica* is not more widely grown in this country. Ranking as it does with the Scillas and Glory of the Snow in beauty, this little bulbous plant certainly deserves to be much more widely known than it is at present. Its flower-spike usually attains a height of about six inches, and the individual blossoms, when fully expanded, are about an inch in diameter. These are white, with a bold stripe of rich porcelain blue down the centre of each petal, and it is in this unique colouring that the principal charm of the flower is found. This striped Squill is a native of Asia Minor, and was introduced to this country nearly a century ago, yet it is not to be found in the majority of gardens to-day.

It is quite hardy, and, once the bulbs are planted, they may be left to take care of themselves. It does not increase so rapidly as the Scillas and Chionodoxas, but will, if undisturbed, multiply steadily in favourable positions. Like most of the bulb tribe, this little plant appreciates a fairly open position towards the front of the shrubbery or in the wild garden, where its quiet beauty can be seen and appreciated in keeping with more or less natural surroundings. In addition to the type there is a dwarf-growing form known as compacta, but for most purposes the type is preferable.

A NEW HARDY PRIMROSE.

It is seldom that the advent of a new plant creates so much enthusiasm as did the new hardy *Primula Winteri* when shown before the Fellows of the Royal Horticultural Society a few weeks ago. Apart from its own characteristic beauty, this Primrose is regarded by many as being the forerunner of a new race, and in the hands of the hybridist it may certainly play an important part in the Primrose family in the near future. In itself it is a plant of rare attractiveness. Its roughly ear-shaped leaves, which form a compact cushion close to the soil, are heavily coated with farina, reminding one more of the show Auriculas than an ordinary Primrose. From the tuft of leaves the flowers are produced in true Primrose fashion, i.e., each one on a separate, slender stem. In colour the blossoms are pale blue or bluish lilac, with a prominent creamy white centre to each. Like many other useful new hardy plants of recent years, this Primrose hails from the Himalayas, and, as I believe it seeds freely, it will doubtless be found in the majority of gardens in this country ere many years have elapsed.

H.

A HARVEST OF POPLARS.

A MODERN writer has framed the delicious conceit that, if it were possible to go out and gather trees as one gathers flowers, the result would surely be a "harvest of poplars." It is perhaps not difficult to see why, for the poplar, in relation to other trees, has something of the slender grace that the lily displays in a garden of sturdier growths, as if it, indeed, might yield readily to the hand desiring to gather it. And if we were to follow that poetic suggestion and go out to gather them, I know of no place to yield a readier harvest than the white roads of France, stretching ribbon-wise so far, so alluringly, into the unknown, guarded always by those twin rows of sentinel poplar trees—pale avenues of shivering silver. They always seem to dominate the landscape, whether one journeys through the wide wheat-filled plains of



THE LAKE AT BELTON—CRIMSON BARKED DOGWOOD



Frederick H. Evans.

EVENING ON A FRENCH RIVER.

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ON Y VOIT UNE EAU CALME ET VERTE,
SOMBRE PARMi DES PEUPLIERS.

—BOSCHOT.

*Frederick H. Evans.*

FRENCH POPLARS.

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. . . DES PEUPLIERS INQUIETS QUI FRÉMISSENT
AU PLUS LÉGER SOUFFLE DU VENT.

—RETTÉ.

the North, or across the vineyards of Burgundy, or the olive-clad slopes of Provence. Tall, fragile and delicate of aspect, they recall the charming lines of the Breton poet :

Et dans ces brumes vespérales,
Les longs et minces peupliers
Font rêver à des cathédrales
Qui n'auraient plus que leurs piliers.

In the South they add to the astonishing greyness of almost all the foliage, the dim, grey-green of ilex and cypress, the polished argent of the olive trees, the shadowy darkness of pine and mimosa boughs ; but in the North they interpose, unrivalled, their own bright silver as with a flash. But they are not less beautiful in their leafless days of winter and early spring, when their slender columns can be seen grouped along the banks of the rivers of Northern France and the blurred lace of their upright intertwined branches is lifted in tones of shadowy purple and amber against a sky of opal and pearl. Their long and slender reflections are mirrored in the twilight-coloured river that glides past them, in a scene such as Corot loved to paint. "The place is silent and aware" ; the dry reeds and rushes tremble in the wind ; some late *perce-neige* push through the blades of grass ; already the violets and primroses and fragile white wind-flowers show furtive faces to the sun. All the delicate greens and greys in the world seem to have painted that landscape with wistful tenderness. The fragrance of spring is here ; the odour of the sap ; the scent of unnumbered opening buds and blossoms. From the river-ways there trails a scarf of frailest gossamer mist, floating like fairy incense swung from unseen censers. Surely in some such fastness of enchantment and glamour Syrinx fled from her goat-footed god-lover and was transformed into a reed by the river-side, for the wind that traces grey wrinkles on the water sighs among the reeds with a music that is reminiscent of some flute-melody. But whatever we seek in France—whether it be the olive groves and palms, the blue seas and skies of her southern shores, her fertile ways of vineyard and cornfield, or the far "silver spear-heads" of the Alps—we shall always keep a place in our remembrance for the slim grace of her silver-shining poplar trees—dear alike to her poets and painters—that flash their welcome to us from every white roadside.

ISABEL CLARKE.

BUCK-HUNTING IN THE NEW FOREST.

BUCK-HUNTING in the New Forest has always existed in one form or another. It was for the sake of the red and fallow deer that the district known as the New Forest was made subject to forest laws ; and whatever his own people may have thought about William Rufus in the eleventh century, the Red King is certainly to be counted one of the benefactors of the twentieth century. For he secured to the English people one of the most delightful playgrounds that it is possible to imagine. But the deer of the forest, fallow and red, whose preservation caused the outlawry of many a sporting yeoman in the Middle Ages, are now themselves outside the law. From a legal point of view there are no deer in the New Forest. They were abolished by Act of Parliament in 1851. But inasmuch as it is one of the essentials of true forest life that there should be deep recesses and untrodden glades, the deer have managed to survive, and afford, especially in the early autumn and spring, some most enjoyable sport. The majority of the surviving deer are fallow bucks and does, but there are a few red deer, and it is known that some were turned out in the days when Mr. Lovell was Master of the Buckhounds. There are also, though they have never been hunted and are seldom seen, a few roedeer. These may be either descendants of the original stock in the Forest or they may have come from Dorsetshire, where this, our only native British deer, still survives in considerable numbers. The deer of the Forest have probably always been a persecuted race, and in our own day, or just before it, they were hunted by bloodhounds, of which sport an interesting account may be found in Mr. Grantley Berkeley's "Reminiscences," by various packs of hounds established for the purpose, and up to about 1860, from time to time, by the Royal hounds. Indeed, it is said that a chase after a forest deer once inspired Charles Davis to break into rhyme :

At Vinney Old Ridge they found a prime stag,
And ran hard for an hour, which caused him to flag,
He was taken near Beirley alive, safe and sound,
But in less than ten minutes fell dead on the ground.

This, if not first-rate poetry, is sound history, for the New Forest stags in those days never survived a run. For in a wet season the ground is distressingly deep, and I have known the yellow mud of the rides in the plantations to reach nearly up to the horse's knees. Then there are the trees and branches and thickets, all of which impede the eager thruster and make caution, a light hand and a handy horse more likely to reach the end of a good run than courage on a hard puller. It was when brushed off his horse by a branch of a tree that Mr. Assheton Smith received a compliment which he greatly appreciated. Somebody asked if he was hurt,

to which Charles Davis replied, "He is much too hard to hurt," which was not only complimentary, but a sound hunting truth. For it is well known that men in hard condition are far less liable to be hurt when they fall than are others.

But it must not be supposed that the Forest is all woods. There are wide tracts of heather and rough grass, with here and there boggy places quite deep enough to hold a horse and rider, though not quite able, as legends relate, to swallow them up alive. The worst penalty of falling into a bog in a wet season is a muddy coat, the loss of a shoe and possibly a horse lamed by the strain. But, roughly speaking, the same rule that keeps us fairly safe on Exmoor—to avoid places where there is a bright green vegetation—holds good in the New Forest. It is also true that where one sees heather one can ride boldly. True, there may be hidden ruts and grips beneath the heather, but as we cannot see them it is no use thinking about them, and, after all, the falling in the New Forest is nearly always soft. The danger, if any, is, as we have seen, to be found in the woods.

Stag-hunting in the New Forest begins in August, a week or so later than the stag-hunting on Exmoor, and lasts for about the same time, but the best of the buck-hunting is in the autumn and the early spring. As on Exmoor, the hounds do not hunt in October or February. The hounds used are draft foxhounds, and the present Masters, Major Timson and Mr. George Thursby, have been successful in getting together a really good lot of hounds. The methods of hunting are much the same as on Exmoor. The deer are harboured by the Royal foresters, and I have seen deer harboured by them in a wonderful way. On Exmoor the harboured is often able to trace his stags into quite small plantations, and it is quite possible to make sure that they have not left their refuge before they are wanted. But in the New Forest the deer seem to be harboured in huge plantations, and one would suppose this was a very difficult task. Yet whenever I have been out with the tufters the harboured have always taken us straight to the lair of the deer, and one of the tufters was challenged within a few minutes of being cheered into the brake in which the deer was said to be lying. I think they use fewer tufters in the New Forest than is at present the custom on Exmoor. I have seen as many as nine couple drawn for tufting from the Devon and Somerset pack, and as few as one and a-half couple from the New Forest hounds. But in both cases the result is the same. The good hounds seldom fail to separate a buck from the herd and to send him out alone into the open. On Exmoor the pack is generally shut up in a convenient farm or outbuilding, but in the New Forest hounds are coupled up and held in leashes like the *relais* of French stag-hunting. The hounds are held by Royal keepers, who guide the pack and its motley following of horsemen and horsewomen, motors, carriages, cycles and pedestrians to a likely place, generally some rising ground near a clump of trees, whence a view of the deer when he breaks may be best obtained. As soon as the deer has disappeared in the right direction the hounds are uncoupled, the tufters having been stopped, and the pack is cast gently over the line. As the hounds touch it a kind of thrill seems to pass through them, there are a few scattered notes and they stretch out for the chase, so quickly and so silently that it is quite easy for a slow starter to lose them almost at once. It has always seemed to me that the New Forest hounds are even more silent than the Devon and Somerset. Once the hounds are settled on to the foil of their deer there is nothing for it but to keep as close to them as you possibly can. To lose sight of them is often to lose the run, and there is nothing more likely than that we shall lose the hounds, even when we pay the greatest attention and exercise the most anxious care to be with them. The run generally begins over the open, where it is comparatively plain sailing if we do not fall into a bog or the horse does not come down at a grip. But sooner or later we are bound to reach a wood, and here the danger of losing hounds is very great. For one thing, there are in the woods often deep grips, almost nullahs, quite big enough for the fallow buck to slip down. After all, he is not a very large beast, and if he drops into one of these places and runs at right angles to his former course we who have been perhaps riding to a quite encouraging cry of hounds may suddenly find ourselves entirely at fault. But if all goes well, after a most interesting hunt and the exercise of a good deal of woodcraft by the huntsman, we find ourselves near our quarry. He crouches in a bog and is fresh found, or, again, takes soil, like a red deer, in one of the many streams of the Forest, lying as close as a rabbit under a protecting bank, or shrouded by the rich autumn undergrowth. If, which is very likely, we do not lose him, for the chances in favour of a buck in the New Forest seem to be greater than those of the red deer on Exmoor, he will begin to run short, and be at last taken, more often than not, in the near neighbourhood of buildings. Like the red deer in this, too, that the outskirts of human habitations are often chosen for his last stand.

There is another point about hunting in the New Forest which adds to its advantages. We can ride small horses. The late Master mounted himself and his men on polo ponies, and I can conceive nothing better for work in the New Forest than the well-bred polo pony stamp. Horses of this kind carry far more weight than their appearance would suggest, and in level countries where there is no jumping, riding nearly fourteen stone, I have often been carried well by polo ponies, whose quality and breeding were more obvious than any apparent power of carrying weight.

Of course, much that I have said of buck-hunting applies equally to the chase of the fox in the Forest, and if that were my topic I would remind my readers that the present pack of foxhounds is well worth a journey to see at work.

X.



MARSKE HALL is one of those old Yorkshire manor houses with an individuality so distinct that one regrets that there are not more of them remaining in the county. The wind-shaped trees which surround the house bear witness to the cold blasts that sweep over the sea and across the northern flats of Cleveland, and the high walls of the gardens at the back of the building form a necessary protection to plant-life in so exposed a place. Very little is recorded of its history, but happy is the building that has none, for restoration and remodelling too often make up the story of old houses. The exterior of Marske Hall has been very little altered. Except that the leaded lights of the windows have been replaced by wooden sashes, and that the old pantiles on the roof have been supplanted by a covering of smoother texture, the south front stands very much as it did in 1625, when Sir William Pennyman built it. If the picture has lost some of its gaiety by the absence of the finials from the parapet and the tops of the turrets, it has gained much from time, which has mellowed the weathered stonework into a delightful patchwork of colour. There can be no doubt that the scale of the building would be enhanced by the restitution of the leaded

lights and by a more rugged covering to the roof, such as the old pantiles gave.

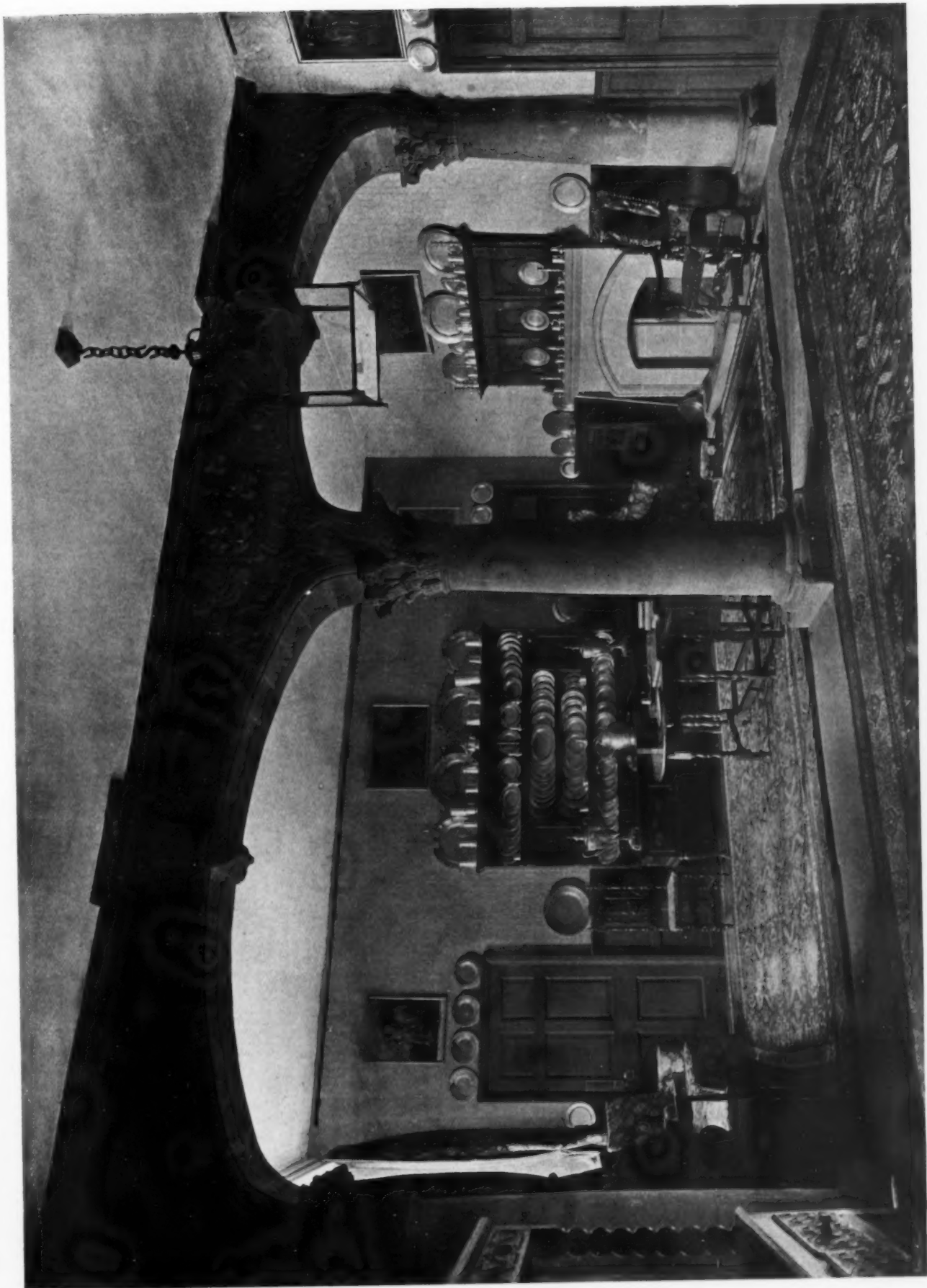
Sir William Pennyman was the trusted servant of Charles I., by whom he was made Governor of Oxford. He died some years before his master was beheaded in front of the Banqueting Hall at Whitehall. But though Inigo Jones had completed the Banqueting Hall a year or more before Sir William began to build at Marske, the house shows no trace of that Italian manner which had already been so triumphantly introduced into England. Instead, the old traditional methods of the master-masons were followed; the methods of men who had worked in the same way for generations, evolving gradually and almost imperceptibly those little variations of detail and technique which go to form a style. The house, thus moulded in the Gothic tradition, might well be guessed to be of an earlier date than it is. There are certain signs, however, such as the narrowness and elongation of the lights of its many mullioned windows and the crudely carved cherubs that form brackets to the ample gargoyles on either side of the bays, which speak of its building in Charles I.'s reign. Moreover, the bold massing of turrets and bays and the absolute symmetry of the south front



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MARSKE HALL: THE GREAT BAYS AND PORCH.

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THE ENTRANCE HALL.

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tell of the growing desire for balance and rhythm which the new manner of the Renaissance was soon to satisfy. The builder of Marske Hall used his traditional features to create an original and satisfactory composition. There is nothing forced or scenic about it. The solemn turrets with their cap-like roofs of wrought stone, the spacious bay windows and the high parapet wall of plain stone all play their part, with the dignity which comes from being exactly right.

Yorkshiremen in the early part of the seventeenth century would appear to have taken an especial pride in the façades of their houses, and the front of Fountains Hall—built a few years earlier than Marske—may be taken for comparison and contrast. In both cases the grouping and massing is bold and symmetrical, and the detail, if crude to a Southern eye, is traditional and effective. But while there is a sense of effort about the design of Fountains Hall, the design of Marske seems to have come about naturally. The carved coat of arms of Sir William Pennyman appears more than once on the outer walls, and occurs again in the curious stone arcade which formed the screen between the hall and the passage-way. The carving of the capitals and the spandrels of this feature must have given great delight to the mason, who was evidently allowed a very free hand in the matter. The desire to imitate classic forms, and the absence in those days of classical models in the North of England, sometimes threw the masons back for inspiration upon the local twelfth century models of the Romanesque work



which flourished before the coming of Gothic. The carved leaves at the angles of the bases of these stone columns have

their prototype in similar detail at the bases of the columns in Kirkstall Abbey and in many another Norman building up and down the country. The staircase is a sturdy piece of oakwork of a pattern usual at the period, and there is much of the original oak panelling in the house; but it is evident that the master-craftsman here was the mason, and he it was who gave that distinctive interest which Marske possesses. The house, though originally built as a permanent residence for the whole year round, as is evidenced by the way it turns its back on the sea and faces southwards over the Cleveland plain, is now used as a seaside house for some months of the year only. Certain alterations were necessary in order that it might fulfil this purpose. These have been made at the back, leaving the old front to tell its own story unencumbered by additions. It is a real pleasure, therefore, among the uninteresting buildings of a modern seaside resort, to come upon so individual and so well-preserved a piece of early seventeenth century architecture. Some of the rooms bear witness to the changes of taste in the times of Queen Anne and the early Georges, and their walls are covered with great painted panels, while their fireplaces are surrounded by moulded stone framework in lieu of a mantel-piece. A glimpse is shown in the photograph of the stone arcade of a fine collection of pewter, many of the pieces in which bear the arms or cypher of the Zetland family. Sir William Pennyman left no children to inherit the place, and it passed to a cousin after his death. More than a hundred years after it was bought by Sir Lawrence Dundas, in whose family it still remains.

SYDNEY D. KITSON.



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STONE ARCADE IN THE HALL.

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SOUTH ELEVATION.

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KIRKLEATHAM HOSPITAL.

A FEW miles from Marske lies Kirkleatham, a village which belongs wholly to the eighteenth century. With the exception of the telegraph posts and the macadam on the roads there is nothing to remind us of a later date. After passing on the railway the blast furnaces and other signs of industrial life which crowd the mouth of the Tees—through Thornaby, Middlesbrough and Cargo Fleet—a short drive of a couple of miles from the station of the unromantic seaside town of Redcar brings us to this quiet spot. Sheltered behind a belt of trees, Kirkleatham turns its back upon the life of to-day, and cherishes a series of buildings which illustrate English architecture from the beginning of the eighteenth century to its end.

First in point of interest, as well as of time, comes the Hospital. Founded in 1676, its buildings were so altered and added to in 1742 that they belong—so far as style is concerned—wholly to the later date. Then there is the Free School, which was built in 1709, now converted into two dwellings. Its largely-conceived central entrance is a monument worthy

the manor of Kirkleatham from Sir William Bellasis. William Turner went to London as a boy and was apprenticed to the trade of a woollen-draper. His shop was in St. Paul's Churchyard, and there, all through the Commonwealth, he traded with such success that he was able after the Restoration to combine the functions of a banker with his other business. Many of his carefully-written folio account books are preserved in the library of the Hospital, and they give occasional glimpses of the character of the man. Every page of the ledgers is headed with "laus Deo"; but this steady, methodical Puritan was not slow to take advantage of the extravagant requirements of the Restoration Court. There are several entries in his "debt booke" of loans made to King Charles II. and to many of his impecunious courtiers. Turner was knighted in 1662, and became Lord Mayor in the year which followed the Great Fire of London. "Under his just and wise administration," wrote Bishop Burnet in his History, "the rebuilding of the City advanced so fast that he would have been chosen Lord Mayor the ensuing year, but he declined." He had been president of the hospitals of



THE COURTYARD GATES.

of Queen Anne's reign, when the Grand Manner was appreciated and practised in life as well as in architecture. A stately—though, it must be owned, ugly—mausoleum was added to the church in 1740, and the church was rebuilt a few years afterwards. The best detail perhaps which it contains is the marble font, with its carved oak canopy. Kirkleatham Hall is approached by some wrought-iron gates of good design, even if the rustication on the gatepiers offers too realistic a resemblance to crocodiles' skins. Within these gates is the forecourt, with a well-balanced and well-proportioned block of stable buildings on the left, such as the eighteenth century architects knew so well how to design. On the right is the Hall itself, which contains some earlier panelling and ceilings; but the house was refronted and enlarged towards the end of the century, when the "Gothic taste" was becoming fashionable but not yet understood. On the coping of the high brick walls, which divide the Hall gardens from the road, stand some eighteenth century lead urns of quite exceptional beauty.

Enough has been said to emphasise the particular spirit of Kirkleatham, and we must return to the Hospital itself. Sir William Turner, its founder, was a remarkable man. He was the third son of John Turner, who had in 1623 purchased

Bridewell and Bethlehem, and had watched Charles II.'s foundation of Chelsea Hospital. As he was, moreover, a wealthy bachelor, it was natural that he should found a hospital in his native village.

The charity provided for the maintenance of ten poor men and as many poor women, ten boys and ten girls. The site and the grouping of the buildings are on the lines of the original plan of Sir William Turner. But his great-nephew, Cholmley Turner—so called because his mother was a daughter of Sir Hugh Cholmley of Whitby Abbey—entirely remodelled the buildings some seventy years later. The plan consists of an oblong courtyard with the chapel in the centre of the south end. The boys' school and master's house are to the right of the chapel and the girls' school to the left. On the ground floor of the east side are the lodgings for the ten poor women, balanced by those for the men on the west. The north side of the quadrangle is enclosed by iron railings and central gates of admirable design and workmanship. A semi-circular forecourt lies between this screen of ironwork and the road which, with its two old trees—planted possibly by Sir William himself—its sunk fence and chain railings, forms a fitting introduction to this house of rest.



FROM THE HIGH ROAD: THE FORECOURT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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The guide-book tells us that "the exterior of the Hospital possesses no architectural pretensions." If we except the strange little castellated bastions placed at the end of either wing to serve as screens to the offices—and they are really rather humorous than pretentious—the guide-book's statement is correct. But it is this very absence of pretension which gives its charm to the place, and the simplicity of the buildings adds value to the statues of an old man and of an old woman which stand in niches over the doors and face each other across the court. There is also a statue of Justice in lead, unfortunately painted, in the middle of the quadrangle. These three statues are excellent specimens of eighteenth century sculpture, and may be the work of Scheemacher, who carved the monuments to the Turner family in the mausoleum near by.

The enrichment of the Hospital has been mainly reserved for the interior of the chapel, and the vivid colours of the Italian stained-glass windows in the apse immediately attract attention. In the centre of the window the Adoration of the Magi is depicted; on the right is the full-length portrait of the founder of the Hospital in his dress as Lord Mayor, and on the left that of his elder brother in his robes as a sergeant-at-law. Two gilt chairs stand within the altar

door below and is fenced with iron-work of a flowing pattern. The bust of Sir William Turner looks out from a niche over the door into the clock tower, while eagles act as supporters on either side and carry the design down to the abaci of the Ionic



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THE CHAPEL PORCH AND TOWER.

rail—they are said to have been given by Charles II. to Lord Mayor Turner in lieu of the repayment of a loan. Whether this be so or not—and they appear to be rather later than Charles II.'s day—they are graceful in shape and line, and delightful by reason of the colours of the old gilding and faded velvet. The carved gilt wood chandelier which hangs from the middle of the chapel roof is a worthy companion to these chairs. Perhaps the happiest contrivance in the chapel is the landing which connects the two galleries, reserved, the one for the ten poor boys and the other for the ten poor girls. It is stepped up on either hand to rise clear of the arch of the entrance



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"Country Life."

THE OLD PENSIONER.

columns beneath. This little chapel, practically untouched since it was built, with its unpolished mahogany woodwork, its graceful columns and vaulted roofs, its marble floor and refined details, forms a typical example of mid-eighteenth century "elegance," an elegance obtained by good proportion, carefully selected detail and a determination that everything in design, material and workmanship shall be of the very best.

The sets of rooms on the floor above the old people's quarters are occupied on one side by the museum and library; on the other by the house for the resident surgeon. The museum, as is the case with all local museums which do not contain local objects, is dull; in fact, if we except a beautiful bit of Spanish carving in boxwood which portrays the story of St. George and the Dragon, it has nothing to show so interesting as the lifting latch of the entrance door. The library is stored with books of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and their mellow bindings tone well with the old oak bookcases.

Owing to agricultural depression the full number of pensioners cannot now be maintained. The surgeon, too, has gone; but the school is efficiently carried on and the buildings



"COUNTRY LIFE."

IRON AND PLASTER WORK IN THE CHAPEL.

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A GILT CHAIR IN THE CHAPEL.

memory of their benefactor, the good Lord Mayor of Charles II.'s day, is at such times often in their thoughts.

are kept in as good a state of repair as the lessened income permits.

One of the quaintest sights to be seen in the north of Yorkshire may be witnessed here any Sunday, when the old pensioners and the scholars, headed by the silver mace and each in their distinctive dress, troop in procession through the great door at the south of the chancel into Kirkleatham Church. We may hope that the

exhibit, year after year, in thus crossing the Channel and braving the treacherous month of March. The chiff-chaff, as usual, is easily the first spring bird I have seen this year. Not a single wheatear had, so far as I have been able to learn, up to March 16th, been noted upon the Sussex coast-line.

WHERE CHIFF-CHAFFS WINTER.

Chiff-chaffs, which range on their spring migration up to and even a little beyond the Arctic Circle, appearing as far to the Eastward as the Volga River, winter largely in the South of Europe, where, below the Alps and Pyrenees, they are resident species. On migration large numbers of them visit North Africa, Palestine, Persia, Arabia and Asia Minor, where they spend the winter months. They have been identified as far South in the African Continent as Abyssinia, and in recent years have, I believe, been observed in British East Africa. If they could only speak to us intelligibly, these tiny migrants, which come to us so regularly in March and early April, could tell of many strange sights and scenes which they have witnessed in the savage countries through which they have wandered. Monotonous though its note may be, compared with the sweet voices of the other warblers to which it is allied, I have always a peculiar affection for the chiff-chaff, the first bird that dares to cross to our shores and tell us that spring is really upon us.

SOME GERMAN NOTES.

With us the chiff-chaff has one or two other rustic or local names besides that with which we are all familiar. "Chip-chop" and "choice and cheap" are two of them. In Germany this small bird has many and various appellations. It is known as the "Zilp-Zalp," "stutterer," "stuttering bush-bird," "willow-bush singer," "willow siskin," "grey bush-bird," "grey wren" and "little mid-wood"; and these by no means exhaust the German vernacular names for this migrant. In that country the period of the chiff-chaff's appearance and departure coincide practically with ours. The bird is not always plentiful, and, as with us, is somewhat locally distributed. It is found often in hilly but seldom in high mountainous country. It is rather curious that, on its passage into Sweden, it seems to prefer to push north for the purposes of nesting, and is not found breeding freely in the south of that country. So Friedrich, the German naturalist, asserts. With us the chiff-chaff is abundant in spring and summer in the Southern Counties, in the South-West and Midlands, and is fairly well distributed in Cumberland, Westmorland, Durham and Northumberland. It is rather local in Norfolk, Lancashire and Yorkshire. In Scotland it becomes scarcer as one advances North, and beyond the Caledonian Canal is distinctly rare. In Ireland it is quite a plentiful species. East of the Volga the chiff-chaff is replaced by an allied species, the Siberian chiff-chaff (*Phylloscopus tristis*), a bird which is somewhat smaller as well as more sober in coloration than our bird. A small form (*P. fortunatus*) is also found in the Canaries. March 16th is a fairly early date for the arrival of this bird in England. Mr. J. E. Harting, in his very interesting book, "Our Summer Migrants," gives March 2nd as the earliest date noted in a considerable series of observations; and Colonel Montagu, in his "Dictionary of Birds," published more than a hundred years ago, mentions March 14th as his earliest record.

A TAME CHIFF-CHAFF.

A naturalist—Mr. Sweet—who published a book on "British Warblers" at the beginning of the last century, has some curious notes on a bird of this species which he caught and tamed. He says: "It is readily taken in a trap baited with small caterpillars. They soon get familiar in confinement; when first caught they should, if possible, be put with other birds, and they will readily take to feed (*sic*) on bruised hemp-seed and bread, and on bread and milk, which must at first be stuck full of small insects, or a quantity of aphides may be shook off a branch upon it; when they have once tasted it they will be very fond of it. One that I caught took to eat it directly, and became so familiar, that in three or four days it would take a fly out of the hand; it also learnt to drink milk out of a teaspoon, of which



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WOOD CHANDELIER IN THE CHAPEL.



Copyright. THE ENTRANCE GATES OF KIRKLEATHAM HALL

"C.L."

it was so fond that it would fly after it all round the room and perch on the hand that held it, without showing the least symptoms of fear; it would also fly up to the ceiling and bring down a fly in its mouth every time. At last it got so very tame that it would sit on my knee by the fire and sleep; and when the windows were open it would never attempt, nor seemed to have the least inclination, to fly out." I have never seen or heard of a chaffinch in confinement, and these notes of an old-time naturalist, although somewhat oddly expressed, seem to me to be worth reproduction from a long-forgotten book.

OWLS AND FISH.

Some correspondence in a contemporary has recalled the fact, long known to close observers of birds, that owls will at times catch and devour fish. The brown owl, especially, is fond of this kind of dietary, and will generally capture fish when opportunity offers. The barn owl will also take fish at times, as will the short-eared species, often known as the "woodcock owl." Probably other birds of this family found in different parts of the world are occasional fish eaters. A familiar instance of this habit was related many years ago by Jesse, the

well-known naturalist. The Duchess of Portland of that period had in her garden at Bulstrode a fish-pond in which she kept gold and silver fish. These fish were constantly missing, and, suspecting poachers, the pond was carefully watched. The watchman soon ascertained that the thieves were none other than brown owls, which came to the side of the water and captured what they required. These birds not only devour fish themselves, but are in the habit, when they have the chance, of feeding their young with them. And if these birds are kept in captivity it will soon be discovered that they will readily eat fish when offered to them. It is not probable that these birds could capture any other than what are known as surface-swimming fish, such, for instance, as roach, dace, gudgeon, bleak, bullheads, loach, gold and silver fish and so forth. The vision of owls, which capture their food for the most part at night, is, of course, wonderfully acute. When one realises the fact that under cover of darkness these birds are able to discern even fish under water and snatch them from their native element, one's wonder and admiration is increased ten-fold.

H. A. BRYDEN.

RED DEER IN NEW ZEALAND.



NEAR THE HEAD OF THE HUNTER VALLEY

THE New Zealand stalking season of 1910 appears to have been much the same as its predecessors so far as immediate results are concerned. Opening on April 1st, during the first fortnight the weather was exceptionally fine, frosty and with little rain or snow. The deer, speaking very generally, were in good condition. In the Dingle and surrounding country "rubbish"—and by this I mean malforms, adult stags useless for breeding purposes, old barren hinds and such-like—seems to have accumulated as rubbish does in even the best regulated concerns. Of this, however, I shall speak later. In the Upper Dingle part of the ground was burnt in the preceding summer, and the fresh grass seems to have induced a temporary migration, though a large proportion of the deer seen there carried inferior heads. This district is under the control of the Otago Acclimatisation Society. In Maitland Creek, which is under the control of the Waitaki Acclimatisation Society, malforms have made their appearance this year for the first time.

Twenty-seven stalkers took out licences, the most successful being a visiting sportsman, Mr. P. F. Hadow, photographs of whose heads killed at the top end of the Hunter Valley appear in this article. From these it will be seen that the man who works hard and exercises judgment can still obtain trophies in Otago which will well repay the efforts made in securing them. I give the measurements of his heads, for which I am indebted to the courtesy of Mr. Rowland Ward, and also of New Zealand heads killed last year which I have obtained from other sources. I do not know who is responsible for the measurements given in the annual report of the Otago Acclimatisation Society, but I

should like to point out that there are certain standard measurements which enable a more or less correct estimate of a head to be formed, and additional ones which, taken in conjunction with the former, are interesting, but, alone, absolutely valueless. The standard measurements are: Length on outside curve; inside span from beam to beam (not from point to point, as the measurement thus obtained depends entirely on the angle at which the



THE GORGE OF MOUNT FERGUSSON



THE HUNTER VALLEY, LOOKING SOUTH

tine diverges from the main beam); and beam, by which is meant the thickness of the horn between the bay and the tray points. The coronet measurement may or may not be worth noting; it is a very slight criterion to the excellence of the head. Circumference between brow and bay is absolutely useless, as a head may measure six inches here and not more than four inches in the proper place.

Four years ago, when I was fortunate enough to be stalking in North Otago, and in a position to judge from my own observation of the condition of the red deer there, I criticised, in a letter to the *Otago Daily Times*, the state of things which I found existing. My remarks, in turn, were severely commented on by a portion of the *New Zealand Press*. Other papers admitted that my observations were warranted, and a discussion followed as to the management of the North Otago herd of red deer. I think that I am right in stating that the general consensus of opinion was that very large "culling" operations were urgently needed. Then, as I say, I was on the spot. Now I am twelve thousand miles away and dependent on hearsay evidence and what I read in the *New Zealand papers*. It seems to me that, in spite of a somewhat half-hearted attempt on the part of the Otago Acclimatisation Society to, if I may so express it, stop the rot, matters show very slight signs of improvement. I have said before, and I say again, that New Zealanders and all sportsmen owe a great debt to the efforts of the acclimatisation societies. No one admires the work that they have done in the face of many obstacles more than I do; but, however much we

may admire them, it does not blind us to their faults, and they cannot expect to exist on a reputation for past successes. If my facts are wrong, I hasten to apologise; I have taken up the self-appointed task of critic in the hope that public opinion may be sufficiently aroused to put a stop to a state of things which a little care at the outset would have obviated altogether.



A 13-POINTER (LENGTH, 45in.).

It is admitted, then, that "rubbish" is there; on the causes which have led to its existence opinion is divided, so I will not attempt to force my own views on others; the fact remains. On the remedy opinion is unanimous. Mr. Allan Gordon Cameron, in a letter to Mr. Hardcastle, a well-known stalker, commenting on the methods adopted for improving the deer, writes: "There cannot be the least doubt that you have adopted the only scientific method of raising the quality of your stags, viz., to weed out the rubbish by an organised effort directed by a committee of experts." This was in 1908, after my old guide, Buckley, with a friend of his named Perry—and no better men could have been got for the job, both being good shots and having an intimate knowledge of the country—had been out after malforms and killed in about six weeks something like a hundred rotten beasts. At a rough estimate, one in every four seen was killed. They advised a great many more being killed than they were allowed, and were willing, to shoot. In the latter part of 1909 they were employed to shoot a limited number of deer, and again in the early part of 1910 (if my information is correct)

they were allowed to do the same and retain the hides for sale. By this means they hoped to recompense themselves for their work and pay the cost of their ammunition and other expenses. In the end they were losers, and will naturally refuse to bind themselves to a similar contract, though, I believe, for a payment of ten shillings per day they would undertake the job. Last year they made an offer to kill a thousand deer for one hundred and thirty pounds. This offer was refused, and from all accounts I have received, culling operations are pretty much at a standstill. John, the ranger, is now the only person authorised to do shooting of this description, and I am informed that the number he is likely to shoot will not err on the side of excess. An assistant was appointed to help him at the end of May, 1910, and paid



A 13-POINTER (LENGTH, 44½in.).

ten shillings a day, but for how long I do not know. It is quite impossible, owing to the nature of the country, for one man to do any permanent good at all. The Otago Acclimatisation Society, in their annual report, admit that they are "face to face with rather a large work," that "steps will have to be taken in the matter." Three years ago steps were to have been taken, but beyond a few tottering stumbles the society have not progressed very far. It strikes an outsider that the society have, in the expressive slang of the day, bitten off rather more than they can chew. Messrs. Chisholm, Cowie and Brown, the committee appointed to visit the locality under discussion, were "satisfied that splendid work had been done, but were impressed with the fact that more vigorous work was necessary." I think I am correct in saying that, during their very short stay at the Dingle Flat, they never penetrated into the heart of the country where the rubbish exists, and hardly saw a deer at all. Yet, if such was their impression after the briefest of brief examinations, what would it have been if they had been camped out on the open hillside for a month or more?

It is of no use importing fresh blood from Scotland, as has been decided upon, until the evil on the spot is first eradicated. The great stronghold of the rubbishy element is that part of the country adjacent to the Morven Hills, where the deer were originally liberated more than a generation ago. One would naturally suppose that any steps taken to reduce their numbers would start there. Yet, what has actually happened? A few malforms have been killed miles away up the Hunter Valley, where they might very well have been left to any stalkers who happened to be hunting there. Any malforms there are in the Hunter Valley, and they are not many unless a great change has taken place since 1907, have spread from the neighbourhood of the Dingle, forced out by the pressure of circumstances. A given area of grazing land will only support a limited number of animals, whether they are healthy stock or rubbish. A stag with a bad head needs food just as much as the most perfect royal that ever trod the forest, and if other beasts have eaten it all, he will move off, further and further afield, until he finds it. So does a little leaven, in this instance represented by a stock of unhealthy deer, in time leaven the whole district! Killing a few stragglers will do no good at all. There will be no material change in the condition of the deer in certain districts in Otago until the whole of the rotten stock is absolutely wiped out. At a conference held at Dunedin in December, 1908, Mr. Robert Hay summed up the whole thing in a sentence. His remedy was drastic, but it was the right one. He boldly said: "The Morven Hills, Timaru Creek, Lower Dingle, Mount Jones and Longslip districts should be practically cleared of deer." The Otago Acclimatisation Society go on year after year adopting suggestions, passing resolutions, humming and hawing over promises, but what practical results have they achieved? Many good stags, very good stags, are killed annually, but such a state of things will not go on indefinitely. Four years ago I said, "The stalking in the district I have mentioned will be worth literally nothing before very many years have passed." Facts have proved my statement. In 1907 about fifty licences were taken out to stalk red deer. I am not quite sure of the figure, but it was about fifty. In 1908, forty-seven; in 1909, thirty-five; in 1910, twenty-seven. Up to 1907 there had been an increase year by year, according to a statement made by Mr. J. H. King in the *Otago Daily Times* of May 11th, 1907. I have not the official figures by me. Since then—since, in fact, public attention was drawn to the alarming increase in malforms and rubbish—there has been a steady drop. Is it stretching deduction too far to suppose that such a drop is the direct natural result of the deterioration of the deer in the districts I have mentioned? We do not hear so much of the "idle rich" in New Zealand. Many stalkers can only get away for a short time. They want a good head, for the average New Zealand stalker is about as keen as the average Austrian. The Makarora and the head of the Hunter Valley are too far for them to go, with, perhaps, a week's hunting at the end of a long journey; they know they have a very remote chance of anything like a good head on the easily-reached blocks where the voice of the malform is heard in the land, so they give up the whole thing as a bad job and go elsewhere.

I hear that the run-holders who have taken up new leases in the vicinity of the Morven Hills talk of taking matters into their own hands and of killing everything they see. Such a step would probably do a great deal more good than harm. I could go on quoting endless statements made by different stalkers as to the spread of the rubbish, but it is unnecessary. Any-one who knows the country knows that the evil is there and that it is spreading. The great thing to do is to stop the wave of migration. A ranger is no doubt of great assistance to sportsmen, being on the spot and knowing the ground. There is only one drawback; in a few years his job will be a sinecure, for there will be no sportsmen to assist.

In their balance-sheet for the year the society give £226 6s. 6d. as spent on "culling the deer herds, shooting malformed stags and other expenses connected with same." No details are given, and what sum the ranger received, and what was devoted to exterminating malforms, I cannot, therefore, say. As I have already mentioned, for one hundred and thirty pounds two guides would have contracted to kill one thousand head of rubbish, and they would have done it. Haphazard and spasmodic efforts are simply wasted. That experienced stalker, "Castlewood," some of whose articles have appeared in English papers under another name, wrote as follows this season: "Well, there is no disguising the fact that our block was infested this year with rubbishy stags, not only malforms, but with young stags with switch tops that will never develop into anything worth a stalker's while to shoot as trophies. The greater proportion of this rubbish has migrated from the overstocked country, having worked round the eastern side of the Dingle *via* the Big Basin, no effort having been made in the last few years to check them. The Upper Dingle now requires a wholesale shooting out of inferior stags and a reduction of the hind stock. We did not see, perhaps, as many hinds as last year, but towards the head of the Dingle, where there is more fresh feed after burns, they were very numerous, and most of the herds were in charge of inferior ten-pointers. If the Dingle is not looked after it will be useless for stalking in a few years' time, like the country further south, and the migration will continue on into the Hunter." This gentleman and Mr. Hadow had an interview with Mr. Chisholm, the president of the society, and pointed out, as many others have done during the past few years, how urgently drastic measures were needed. Mr. Chisholm assented, and there, I suppose, the matter will end. Mr. Turnbull, another experienced stalker, two years ago said that the question of deterioration was deserving the earnest attention not only of the people, but of the Government. In 1905 the attention of the society was drawn by a practical stalker to the increase of rubbish. Ever since, year after year, with increasing emphasis, the fact has been reiterated, and the deer are, practically speaking, in the same condition—or worse—as they were five years ago. A certain number of bad stags and a few hinds have been killed, but there has been no systematically organised effort to get rid of them. The council of the society—I quote the leading article in a New Zealand paper—is "composed largely of enthusiastic anglers," who know nothing whatever of deer.

The sole effort which this council has made to raise funds to check the spread of deterioration has been vetoed by the Government, for they proposed raising the stalker's licence from four to five pounds. The president has publicly stated that if the revenue obtained from stalking licences and that obtained from fishing licences were appropriated solely to the preservation of the sports by which they were raised, the society would soon be in the Bankruptcy Court. In other words, he says, "Give us our fish and we don't mind what happens to the deer." There is only one chance left. If the Otago Acclimatisation Society and the Waitaki Acclimatisation Society work together in one organised effort to maintain the reputation of what in future years may still be one of the finest deer-stalking countries in the world, they may succeed, though they have left themselves a very narrow margin.

A sub-committee should be appointed who really understand deer and the difficulties which stand in the way of the society. Is it impossible to apply to the Government for assistance? New Zealand is widely advertised as a paradise for the visiting sportsman, apart altogether from the magnificent prospects it offers to those who have made their home there, and who are a nation of sportsmen at heart. Deer-stalking is one of the finest pursuits in the world, and tends to produce those qualities which the Anglo-Saxon race has cherished through countless generations. But neither the visiting sportsmen nor the New Zealander himself will travel any distance to shoot the rubbish which is at present accumulating on the hills of North Otago.

NEW ZEALAND RED DEER (SOUTH ISLAND).

Name.	Locality.	Points.	Length. in.	Beam. in.	Span.	Spread. in.
P. F. Hadow	Hunter Valley	6×7 7×6 6×6	45 44½ 43½	5½ 5 5½	31 — —	40½ 39½ 38½
Name of owner.	Locality.	Points.	Length. in.	Beam. in.	Span.	Spread over all. in.
R. Nicholson	Hunter Valley	5×5	42	42	39	39
J. Forbes	"	6×7	41½	41	37½	37½
R. M. D. Morton	"	7×6	41	41	39½	39½
J. Forbes	"	11	40½	40½	32½	32½
R. Nicholson	"	5×5	40½	40½	38	38
E. Hardcastle	The Dingle	7×7	39½	39½	40	40
J. Northcote	Aburire Gorge	6×6	39½	39½	39½	39½
P. H. Johnson	"	7×7	37½	37½	35½	35½

I include measurements of three heads shot in the Rakaia

Gorge as being interesting for purposes of comparison, though they cannot be regarded as specimens of genuine wild deer

Name of owner.	Points.	Length. in.	Beam. in.	Spread. in.	Brow- points. in.	Wt. of skull and horns lb.
Dr. Moorhouse ..	12	46½	7	34	16½	23
H. J. Beswick ..	11	45½	6	30	—	18
Hon. H. F. Wigram	14	38½	6½	30	—	19

Tops, 19½ in. and 18 in.

FRANK WALLACE

O'ER FIELD & FURROW.

A GOOD SCENTING DAY WITH THE PYTCHLEY.

THE Pytchley Hounds had a full day's sport, after meeting at Kilsby, on March 25th. They found a scent which has scarcely been better this season. The first fox set his mask straight for Ashby St. Ledgers, and after a race of a quarter of an hour hounds marked him to ground. Ashby gave the second fox, and this time the pack rather took the field by surprise, so quickly and silently did they go away. The pace and the scent were alike too good for much music, and the pack swept along in much the same order as they started, each hound straining to keep its place and none able to gain upon the others. The comparatively small body who got away with them had enough to do to hold their own, and luck and resolution, combined with a good horse, enabled a much-diminished field to see their fox killed, nearly forty minutes from the start, close to Daventry. The day finished with a gallop from Braunston to Shuckburgh Hill. It was one of those days on which a series of good hunts gave an opportunity to each one who was out, and able to seize the chances that occurred, to see something of the day's sport. The servants and the hounds had a long way to go before they reached the kennels at Brixworth, which was not done till after nine o'clock at night.

A MORNING WITH THE TEDWORTH.

When the springtime comes, the Tedworth Hounds look forward to having their best days with some of the stout woodland foxes of Savernake Forest. With plenty of moisture in the ground, and the east wind cutting us as we face it on the way to the meet, there is always more than a chance of a scent in the Tedworth country. Like many countries which have not the reputation of carrying a good scent, when the Tedworth one does hounds can simply race. The Hunt is fortunate in that the present Lord Ailesbury, like his father before him, is a friend of fox-hunting, and they are likely to have in the future, as in the past, freedom of the hunting-grounds of Savernake Forest, which are, in their way, incomparable. Foxes lie almost anywhere in this country, and the fox of the day, on this occasion, was found in a pit near Noake Wood. The run lasted just about three-quarters of an hour, and there really was, what we often read about but seldom see, a burning scent. With heads up and sterns down, the pack followed without pause or waver every turn of the fox. He must have been a good fox to stand so long before hounds with such a scent. But he was fairly beaten when hounds ran into him on the earth at Durley. It took a good man and a good horse to be with hounds as they ran on this occasion, and there is no doubt that, under their present Master, to live with the Tedworth when they run makes a well-bred horse necessary.

SCARCITY OF
FOXES.

I am sorry to hear that the Berwickshire, of which Sir John

Hume Campbell is Master, is troubled with a scarcity of foxes. I hear, too, that the Master threatened to resign, and only consented to go on on being assured by the covert-owners that foxes would be more carefully preserved. It cannot be too often repeated that in a country hunted by foxhounds the laying of poison in the coverts should be absolutely forbidden. It is not a good way of getting rid of vermin, even if it were possible to make sure that only those animals for whom it was intended should pick up the deadly baits. The only advantage of laying poison is that it saves the keeper trouble. But apart from the danger to foxes and hounds, the practice creates an enormous amount of ill-will to game-preservers in the district. And I sometimes think that if the owners of coverts knew what was said and thought about the laying of poison, they would forbid it absolutely. For in all these cases the ultimate responsibility rests, and must rest, with the owners of the coverts. A keeper can always be prevented from laying poison or setting traps or destroying foxes if the owners or tenants are really averse to it.

JAMES LINFOOT.

What Dick Christian was to our grandfathers, or Dick Webster to an early generation, that James Linfoot, the well-known horse-breaker, was to the sportsmen of Yorkshire. That he should have met his death upon the road is one of the ironies of Fate, because, I suppose, no man living had ridden more young horses over a greater variety of fences than James Linfoot. Courage, hands, seat and sound judgment enabled him to get a raw colt over the York and Ainsty country in a way that it was a lesson in horsemanship to watch. He had his share of falls, but seldom came to serious grief; and I think he would have agreed with Dick Christian that, although young horses may give one more falls than the older ones, they do not so often bring their riders to serious grief. A young horse will often extricate himself from a serious difficulty where an older horse will give himself up for lost and roll over on you. Of the many falls I have had in the course of my hunting experience, the worst have always been when riding old and trusted horses, and I have no doubt that we should find, if we looked into it, that this was the case in most of the serious accidents which have happened during the past season.

THE QUORN.

The close of the season was seen to be near when, after meeting at Six Hills on Monday, the Quorn were stopped several times in Thrussington Wolds and Ragdale Wood, both trusty coverts, because they were discovered to be hunting vixens. But after a long search a cunning old dog fox was put up in a field close to the village of Old Dalby. Hounds got a good start, and ran hard through Lord Aylesford's covert and Shoby Scholes almost to Ragdale; but though the pack ran with considerable dash at first, it was clear that the scent was not good, and from running hard they came to hunting on what was clearly a fading scent, the fox fairly beating them somewhere in the neighbourhood of Walton

Thorns. A sweeping storm and a bitter wind spoilt all scent of the next fox, and hounds were stopped and taken home.

THE BELVOIR
WEDNESDAY.

The week which began in storms has ended in fog, and the Belvoir Wednesday was spoilt by the thick mist. Thirteen couple of hounds slipped away with but two men in attendance, and ran their fox to ground after a brilliant ten minutes. During the day Mr. Archibald Smith had a bad fall, which left, however, no serious consequences. On Thursday two followers of the Cheshire came to grief in a brook near Abbey Fields. One of them was right under his horse, but the animal managed to find his feet and scramble



OLD ENGLISH HARRIERS—RAVAGER

out. The other one had just found his feet in the brook when he was knocked over by his horse, a thing which is very liable to happen if we make a mistake at water. One of the most unpleasant falls I recollect was when, riding a horse at a deep drain half full of water in Lincolnshire, the horse stopped short on the bank, shot me over his head, and then tumbled in on the top of me. Somehow or other we managed to struggle apart, and I got out; but it took a rope and a team of horses to extricate the horse from that ditch.

OLD ENGLISH HARRIERS.

Many years ago I recollect as a boy hunting in Surrey and Sussex with a pack of old-fashioned, blue mottled harriers. They were only a scratch pack kept by some of the farmers in our neighbourhood, and assembled on hunting days to the number of some six or eight couples. I have never forgotten them; grand hounds with noble heads and long ears, black and tan and blue mottle the colours. Their music (and I have never heard richer tones in all my long hunting experience) was grand. These six or eight couple on a hare would make as much noise as a whole pack of foxhounds. Nor did the music ever fail to draw me out to run as long as I could keep with them. These Old English harriers are becoming sadly rare, and it is difficult to obtain fresh blood for the few existing packs.

All lovers of hounds owe a great debt to Mr. Alexander Campbell and the members of the Hailsham Hunt for the way they have preserved this fine type of hound, of which theirs is, indeed, perhaps the leading pack. I believe the Penistone, Stannington



RINGWOOD.

a good horse gallop to keep on terms with them. In the low-lying lands they are hunted as foot-harriers, but on the Downs their followers ride. No pack in England have a better record of sport than the Hailsham Harriers, and they attract large and enthusiastic fields. It is to be hoped that those packs which employ this type of hound may long flourish.

X.

LITERATURE.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

EXAGGERATION is not often a desirable characteristic of fiction. At any rate, in portraying the world of our own time, the greatest virtues are those of moderation and fidelity. Indeed, they are one and the same. No one who is faithful can help being moderate. At the same time, exaggeration has its place, and Mr. Maurice Hewlett has used it most appropriately in his mediæval romance, *Brazenhead the Great* (Smith, Elder). What renders the exaggeration so palatable is that it is accompanied with a flow of high spirits and a correspondingly boisterous chaffing of the hero, so that the historian, as he loves to call himself, is never in danger of being taken too much in earnest. An adequate idea of the person of Brazenhead may be obtained by imagining the Alsatian bully of Marlowe's tragedy, who is described in the famous passage:

He sent a shaggy tottered staring slave,
That when he speaks draws out his grisly beard
And winds it twice or thrice about his ear:
Whose face has been a grindstone for men's swords;
His hands are hacked: some fingers quite cut off;
Who, when he speaks, grunts like a hog, and looks
Like one that is employed in catzerie
And cross-biting . . .

Add to this sinister figure the jovial, boasting wit of Sir John Falstaff, a touch of Mine Ancient, and the flavour of a Hewlett personality, and you get very near the character. In his own esteem, he is one of the world's greatest, and his imagination colours his exploits in a manner that would have made the fat knight green with envy. Yet he is not greatly pot-valiant.

His performances, even after a most liberal discount is made, are cast on heroic lines and bear out the promise of the invocation which in mock heroics, a little after the style of Fielding, Mr. Hewlett has given as a preface to the story:

Sing greatly upon thine epic lyre how he hammered sconces, hacked and slew; how he bathed in blood like ducks in a puddle; how he drank and swore in many tongues; how popes and prelates, counts and cardinals, dukes and dicers, tumbled at the wag of his finger. Then in milder measure, love's roseate thumb being thy muting-piece, sing of love himself; for love, lady, as thou knowest, is, as it were, the bath of heroes, sweet solace after toil.

We follow the fortunes of Brazenhead with unfailing interest and amusement, and are scarcely conscious that while relating them the artist is causing to pass before our eyes one of the most energetic and lively pictures conceivable of the Middle Ages. The bravo, passing from place to place and country to country, shows us in a story that has far more action than some of the author's narratives what life was like in various places in the fifteenth century. Among other things he was third murderer to the Duke of Milan; yet let not the reader imagine that he will be shocked. In that capacity he is despatched to slay a strange variety of State prisoners, men who had committed various crimes. But even as Shakespeare refrained from having his murders done on the stage, so Mr. Maurice Hewlett at the critical moment always avoids staining the hands of his hero with life-blood. We cannot say there is no blood, because his method is to strike off their fetters, put them on an equality with himself, and fight them. Perhaps the story would have been strengthened if he had been permitted to finish one or two of these miscreants; but, no doubt, the artist-author considered that this might introduce

a tragical feeling which would not be in keeping with the joyous tone of the book, and, after all, the background is tragic enough. It is the idea that the Duke of Milan, turned by fear from doing murder himself, finds a remaining and horrible pleasure in the murders committed by his instruments.

His next adventure takes him to Bordeaux, then an English town, in the month of May of the year 1428. Here we see the typical soldier of fortune who had got into trouble in his own land and was any man's swordsman who hired him:

"If fate must have it that I fight in this good land of France, let it be for France that I draw my sword. England, England!" he cried, "thou who hast forsworn me, be thou of me forsworn!"

In the stage hostelry, therefore, he is ensconced at the expense of one John Pym, who is as typical of his time as the other. He recruits Brazenhead and a horde of the same kidney:

"You have here, my Pym," the Captain had said frankly, "a score of the sorriest scoundrels in this broken realm of France. You have a coin-clipper, two Jews, three Andalusian half-castes, an unfrocked priest, and two men condemned to the hulks for robbing children on their way to church. If that pock-marked fellow on the bay is not a deserter from the English, then I don't know a horse from a mule; and as for your Gascons, let widows weep. They will talk themselves off this earth in four-and-twenty hours."

Rousing adventures they had, which the reader will find out for himself. The expedition undergoes many vicissitudes, and in the course of the warfare, murders, ravishings and so on that are hinted at rather than described in the narrative, Mr. Hewlett gets in a very pretty and fanciful description of the Provence of the time. This is the idyll of the Young Man Barefoot, who is encountered "in a leafy gorge, sitting upon a rock with his bare feet in a pool, his bare head crowned with a chaplet of faded roses, a lute on his knee and a wallet by his side." He had lost his lady-love under distressing circumstances. He had been summoned before the Court of the Green Wood for being too happy in his love, and the sentence passed upon him was as follows:

I was to go to the University of Toulouse to study jurisprudence; and she—the lovely Roesia—must accompany me a full half of the way. Those more fortunate lovers who remained in the good court of King René—for our tragedy had been enacted there, on the orchard-terraces, under the shaded colonnades of Aix-en-Provence—were to be our escort. Our brows were bound with myrtle, and our necks linked—poor prisoners!—with chains of anemones; we were set in the midst of the bevy upon white mules caparisoned in red; and whenever one of us leaned aside to kiss the other one of the company sang a *lai*. Owing to this laudable custom it fell out that between Aix and Beaucuire, where we were torn apart, each member of the company had sung some five times.

This gay company of lovers was confronted by the bristling menace of war. A troop of ruffians out for plunder and armed with swords, clubs and similar tools proved more than a match for youths whose only arms were lutes and viols.

Perhaps the most extraordinary adventure of all is the last one in the chapter, which appears to have some sort of a mystical or aphoristic meaning. Brazenhead in the end is killed by his own youth even as his own youth killed him. Not a very deep metaphor perhaps, but a wise and pregnant one. We take leave of the ranting blackguard with regret. He has kept us merry and gay for many pages, and is the more to be thanked because while doing so there passes behind him, as it were at the back of the stage, a series of vivid and lurid pictures of Europe in the Middle Ages. It is this which gives substantial interest to the story. The adventures of the chief character are not sufficiently coherent to have kept up an interest in themselves. As far as the effect goes Mr. Hewlett might have written the several sections into which the book is divided as short stories contributed to the magazines. They are bound together not by the plot, but by the personality of the chief character. Other men, women and children appear and disappear on the scenes, and we are left to conjecture what the continuation of their lives must have been. Of course, it must have been that way with the mercenary of those times. Granted that he might have the eloquence, even the poetry, of Brazenhead, accompanied as these qualities might have been with an unassuageable appetite for adventure and a readiness to fall in love with every pretty face he encountered, it is obvious that in the course of his campaigns, or, rather, adventures—for he does not seem to have allied himself to any particular army, but merely shifted from one country to another when the atmosphere became too hot for him—he must have encountered a vast diversity of characters, most of whom floated past like figures in a procession. He might be on the most intimate terms with a man or woman to-day and to-morrow be sent whirling in an opposite direction, never again to meet them in the course of his life. Be their lives tragedy or comedy, they but touch his and fly apart. We can scarcely imagine that anyone living such a life could have been so full of sentiment as Brazenhead was; and we think, too, that Mr. Hewlett at moments carries his artistic exaggeration a little too far. The story of the serving-maid at the inn, who broke the heart of the scrivener's apprentice, who loved her, by running to join an Ursuline Convent because of the shock she had received

from the conversation of Brazenhead, is incredible. It would have passed the power of Napoleon himself to say anything that would make a maiden take such a course, or to make a confession that would make the priest die in the night "howling like a wolf." But it would be a sorry thing to insist on these light blemishes in a novel which is so rollicking. Without extravagance, the tale would have been naught, and the horrors of the time would have loomed too horribly through the thin veil of romance.

ROYAL REMINISCENCES.

From Memory's Shrine. Personal Reminiscences of Carmen Sylva (H.M. Queen of Roumania). Translated from the German by Her Majesty's desire by her former secretary, Edith Hopkirk. (Sampson Low, Marston.)

"I AM about to throw open the sanctuary I have so long jealously guarded from the world—the private chapel within whose niches my Penates are enshrined," writes Carmen Sylva; but the reader who is led to expect intimate revelations will certainly be disappointed. The scenes and persons so charmingly described in *From Memory's Shrine* belong to the childhood and youth of the Queen, and throw much light upon the educational systems in vogue half a century ago. Carmen Sylva relates that when, as a child of four, she sat to Karl Sohn for her portrait, she fainted after a long sitting. Upon her return to consciousness he was astonished that her mother only gave her a sip of cold water and a piece of black bread to revive her! The system was not without its results, for she tells us that her poor little brother, Prince Otto zu Wied, after a night of agony, "would walk up and down his room with his little fists clenched saying 'now I am ready—now I can go in,' before daring to appear at breakfast. He died at the age of eleven. 'Be calm,' he said to his mother on his death-bed, 'it is only the body that suffers, nothing of this can hurt the soul.'" Despite the severity of their training, these sensitive, nervous children were permitted to interest themselves in the table-turning *séances*, the experiments in hypnotism which were then the rage. This atmosphere "highly charged with the marvellous" must have been a peculiarly unwholesome one for them. The Queen relates briefly the story of her own courtship and marriage with the young Prince Carl of Roumania. The translation is well done, and the illustrations include several picturesque photographs of the Royal writer.

TWO BOOKS ON THE BALEARIC ISLES.

Mediterranean Moods, by J. E. Crawford Fitch. (Grant Richards.)

The Fortunate Isles, by Mary Stuart-Boyd. (Methuen.)

THESE two books on a comparatively unknown part of the world have appeared practically simultaneously, and may be dealt with together. They afford interesting evidence of the great truth that what a man brings with him, that he sees. The second book may be taken first. It is a feminine, discursive, detailed, pleasant description of a pleasant journey, well worth reading, though it perhaps aims a little too consciously at producing an effect of humour, and is never so moved by or absorbed in what it is describing as to forget the describer. It gives a very good idea of the outside of the Balearic Isles. The illustrations are charming drawings, some of them most charming, and therein they are greatly superior to the illustrations of the other book, which are mainly reproductions of rather stiff photographs. But, apart from this, the other book wins all along the line. In it you see an original, independent, masculine mind, absorbed in what it is perceiving, but unconsciously putting its own impress on all it perceives. To begin with, Mr. Fitch went travelling to the Balearic Isles with all seven volumes of Gibbon's "Decline and Fall," which is enough to make one love him instantly. He is humorous when he is amused, not because he wishes to be humorous; he is sorrowful when he is depressed, not because he wishes to touch the reader. He captures the present, and recaptures the past. He tramps San Antonio in company with two blind ballad-singers, and loses his head with the San Cristobal chemist over the wonderful pre-historic remains of the island. He is sensitive to the personality of towns and the character of districts, and conveys his resulting mood with certainty. He thinks, and connects fact with fact, as he goes along. In short, this is that conjunction of a mind and a country which alone results in a book deserving the often misplaced title, "A book of travel."

A NEW BOOK BY MISS OLIVE SCHREINER.

Woman and Labour, by Olive Schreiner. (T. Fisher Unwin.)

A REAL contribution to the vexed question of "Votes for Women." Miss Schreiner's matter is new, her approach to her subject exceedingly unusual, her plea supported and explained, her argument a real argument and not merely an assertion. Whether the conclusions she draws from her premises are the just conclusions must be left to her readers to decide; but whatever may be the views held, this is a book which is not to be dismissed as one is, unfortunately, obliged to dismiss most female arguments. It is clever, it shows reason, it is original, and it attempts to bring the question of the position of women into relation with the economic conditions and changes of our day.

AS YOU WERE!

The Swing of the Pendulum, by Marcel Boulestin and Francis Toye. (Evelyn Nash.)

AVOWEDLY cynical and frivolous, and undeniably amusing. A number of English people, one unusually handsome American, and one unusually attractive Frenchwoman go to spend three summer weeks together in Ploubalay. There the married Colette, who is distinctly "a little baggage," falls in love with the handsome and upright but highly chivalrous Jones, who is not in the least in love with her; and the situation speedily reaches the point where, with the earnest acquiescence of all concerned, especially Colette's husband, Jones and Colette depart from Ploubalay, she to her parents and he to Paris, there to await honourably the proceedings which shall free them. No sooner have they departed, however, than Colette falls out of love with Jones, and Colette's husband re-falls into love with Colette—and the story ends with a ludicrous "as you were." No harm having been done by anybody, the "as you were" is possible. The atmosphere is distinctly French, the characters most amusing, and the description of the life in Ploubalay enough to make everyone hasten there at once.

LIFE AND THE SUPER-TRAMP.

A Weak Woman, by W. H. Davies. (Duckworth.)

IN form this book is a novel; but the plot is so sketchy and the writing so discursive that it is not likely to possess attractions for the ordinary story reader.

It will, however, interest those who know the author and the peculiar world for which he speaks. In this book the tramp poet shows us how people live, move and have their being in the cheapest of cheap lodging-houses. Incidentally, by the introduction of one or two most sensational incidents, he gives us an idea of the sort of writing—we will not call it literature—which appeals to the submerged; and, finally, it is an exhaustive study of impecuniosity as it is known in London.

AN EXPERIENCE AT VERSAILLES.

An Adventure. (Macmillan.)

A DETAILED and authenticated account of a strange story which has been knocking about the world for a long time, and is here for the first time related as it happened by the two ladies to whom it happened. Messrs. Macmillan vouch for its authenticity, and Mr. Andrew Lang has stated his belief in the good faith of the two narrators, who apparently, going to visit Trianon for the first time, walked into the mind of Marie Antoinette. Whatever explanation may be offered of their extraordinary experiences, they are exceedingly interesting, and not a little moving.

A CONFUSION OF TWO ARTS.

The Fiddler, by Mrs. J. O. Arnold. (Alston Rivers.)

FATE is the Fiddler, and to carry out the notion further Mrs. Arnold divides her story into an *andante*, an *allegro* and an *adagio*, but even the *allegro* is not a very cheerful movement, for the tale throughout is in the minor key. It is concerned with two unequal marriages, of a mother and daughter. The mother's ends in disaster; the daughter's only escapes doing so by the path of pain and suffering. It is an earnest book, full of faith in the power of love to retrieve the inequalities of unequal birth.

BOOKS TO ORDER FROM THE LIBRARY.

The Digressions of Elihu Vedder. (Constable.)

Shepherds of Britain: Scenes of Shepherd Life, edited by A. L. T. Grosset. (Constable.)

The Unknown God, by Putnam Weale. (Macmillan.)

The Girl from the Marsh Croft, by Selma Lagerlöf. (Werner Laurie.)

The Case of Laetitia, by Alexandra Watson. (Smith, Elder.)

Vittoria-Victrix, by W. E. Norris. (Constable.)

ON THE GREEN.

BY HORACE HUTCHINSON AND BERNARD DARWIN.

BIARRITZ V. PAU.

WHAT adds a great deal to the interest of that annual foursome match between Pau and Biarritz for the cup given in the first instance by Lord Kilmaine, whose untimely death we always have to deplore at these gatherings, is that the courses of these two resorts of the golfing Briton are so much the antithesis of each other. Biarritz is a short green, with very severe punishment for error. Pau, with the added length given by its comparatively recent stretching out along the river-side, gives a deal more value to distance of drive and second shot, but does not visit nearly such heavy disaster on the crooked hitter. The two courses test quite different qualities in the golfer. In the latest match, Mr. Douglas Currey and I, who write, won seven holes on the two rounds at Biarritz from the Pau champions, Mr. Mackay and Mr. Jameson. We played steady golf, as the scores, 71 for the first round, with a seven to the

ATTRACTIONS OF PAU.

Pau, until this year, has been rather in a backwater of the popularity which it really deserves among English people, but now it seems to have come into the current again. There is every reason why the Briton should like it; the golf is good, the scenery is superb, the club is comfortable, there is a tennis court and there are foxhounds, a casino where you can roller skate or gamble, and if you prefer higher joys, you can vary your sensations by flight in a dirigible balloon, biplane, monoplane or any known species of these neck-breaking engines. There have been more Englishmen in Pau this winter, and more of the game-playing sort, than for a long while before, and it is only reasonable to think that they will repeat the visit and bring others. The flying and the spectacle of the flying-machines seem to be an attraction, and the Plain of Billères is not in reality darkened by the shadow of their swarms in the air, though it has been suggested *pour rire* that they habitually descend on the putting greens. As



MR. MANSFIELD HUNTER.

first hole, and 70 for the second round, bear full witness; but our opponents were very kind to us on the putting greens. Biarritz greens are always tricky, though not nearly as tricky, in their much-amended state, as they used to be. But all our holes being gained on the green, it did not seem at all impossible that the ultimate result might not turn to the advantage of Pau in the final thirty-six holes on that course, where the short game has not quite so much value. Mr. Mackay is a very steady, sound Scottish golfer. Mr. Jameson is the young player who made his name when he beat Mr. Lionel Munn for the Irish "close" championship, and is a fine golfer with all his clubs till he comes to the humble, necessary putter. At Pau, in the morning round, I committed the signal iniquity of topping two tee shots—not a bad percentage out of only four played; nevertheless, we ended that round as we had begun, seven up. In the afternoon round we again gave chances, which were accepted only to a kindly, limited extent, and in the end we won the long match by 5 up and 4 to play. In the team match, every Biarritz golfer won his match at Biarritz, and every Pau man won at Pau—result, honours easy, and evidence that there is some value in local knowledge after all.

a matter of fact, they launch themselves from higher ground at some distance away and pass over high in the air.

PROFESSIONALS AT ST. JEAN-DE-LUZ.

The professionals, Braid, Taylor, Sherlock and Massy, the last on his home course, had experience of the very quick changes to which the weather in the near neighbourhood of the Pyrenees is liable in their two days' exhibition on the new green at St. Jean-de-Luz. On the first day they were engaged in a scoring competition, wherein Taylor and Massy tied for first place at 144 for the two rounds. Braid was third at 148, and Sherlock was seven strokes more. These are good but not remarkable scores, for the conditions were in their favour. On the second day, when they were to be playing matches, it blew something like a full gale and there was abundance of rain. Perhaps it is rather a cruel thing to say that it would have been amusing to see these good men struggling with adversity, but there would assuredly have been an interest in watching their control of the ball, or loss of it, in such a fierce wind, when playing a scoring game. About the match game there is not the same dreadful responsibility attaching to each shot. However, the Pyrenean rain and gales

are too severe to be contended with, and the Briton at home can hardly realise them. The match had to be abandoned, and though the following day was brilliant, after the quick-change fashion of that capricious climate, they had time for a single round only before taking train for the further fulfilment of their programme on the Riviera.

BRAMSHOT REVISITED.

A day or two since I played once more at Bramshot. The weather was far from being on its best behaviour, for although an enthusiastic voice on the telephone informed me in the early morning that it was a beautiful day, the rain came down with a pitiless and steady persistency worthy of Bogey—the steadiest person I can think of. Under the circumstances I am paying the course a high compliment when I say that I enjoyed myself very much indeed. It is a wonderfully pleasant and quiet spot in which to play golf; the view over the water from the second green is charming, and the greens have come on well under the fostering care of Tom Ball, who is, by the way, the latest distinguished golfer to have been burgled. The greens used to be rather bare, fast and bumpy, whereas now they are true and slow with plenty of grass on them. To make a more or less detailed criticism, I should say that the course begins very well and ends very well, but has a distinct lapse in the middle of the round. The first few holes are long, narrow and difficult—and, incidentally, the Bramshot heather has not yet been subdued into mildness by too many niblick shots; so are the last few, but there are two or three holes in the middle which, though they are pleasant enough, have yet no particular virtues.

SOME OF THE HOLES.

The best holes are, I think, emphatically the longer holes, and some of them are capital. There is the third, for instance, a very fine two-shot hole, where I declared that I had "made" my partner with my tee shot, and he responded by slicing me into a gorse bush—the only ghost of a mistake of which he was guilty. Then there is the fifth, a hole that is a little too long to be called a two-shot hole, where the fairway is of an almost unparalleled and most alarming narrowness. The fifteenth and seventeenth again are as good as need be, and the latter has a most seductive tee shot: gorse bushes in front, fir trees to the left and every inducement to go out for a long, hooked drive—in other words, for death or glory. As regards the short holes, they have been digging bunkers at the twelfth hole since I was there last, and they have dug them fiendishly close to the hole. Only quite a short mashie shot is needed, which must be tossed high into the air to pitch upon a green that slopes away from one. The bunkers—two sufficiently large and voracious pots—are within some ten yards of the hole, and even on a wet day the ball took some stopping. I have an impression that in dry, hard, summer weather even Taylor himself would only stop his ball at the hole side by the illicit process of pitching it in one of the bunkers and trusting to it hopping out again. This twelfth is a pretty enough little hole, but I like

better the fourteenth, which needs an iron shot, or from the back tee a cleek shot, on to a well-guarded and curly green. Curiously enough, all the three short holes come in the second half, for there is none in the first. In this respect it is almost the exact converse of Sandwich, or, rather, of what Sandwich used to be before they made the present and very excellent sixteenth hole.

GOOD-BYE TO TOM VARDON.

We had only just recovered from the shock of hearing that Rembrandt's "Mill" was going to America, when we learned the even worse news that Tom Vardon was going there, too. This, coming on the top of the new plateau greens at the tenth and seventeenth holes, will make quite a changed place of Sandwich, and while some are glad and some are sorry to lose the old holes, everybody will be sorry to lose Tom Vardon. The Americans have made some good captures before. They took a very fine amateur from us in Mr. H. H. Barker, now the professional at Garden City, and Mr. "Bobby" Andrew is going the same way. Vardon, however, is by far the greatest catch they have made yet.

MR. MANSFIELD HUNTER.

Probably no golfer either in England or Scotland has more friends than Mr. Mansfield Hunter. He belongs to more clubs than I should care to enumerate, but North Berwick, St. Andrews, Muirfield and Woking have an especial claim upon him. He was captain of the famous Oxford side that beat 69 holes to nothing, and it was largely due to his initiative that the Oxford and Cambridge Golfing Society made their tour to America, a tour of which Mr. Hunter has left a most entertaining record in the work of the society. He has won the medals both of the Royal and Ancient and the Honourable Company, and, when at his best, is a very fine golfer, as he is always a graceful and attractive one. Good as is Mr. Hunter's golf, still better is his charming personality, which makes him one of the gayest and most delightful of companions on a golfing holiday or anywhere else. Nor must I forget to state that much practice on the Oxford and Cambridge Society tours have made a most amusing after-dinner speaker of him. He does not generally look quite so fierce as Mr. Ambrose has made him, but no doubt the putt is a very critical one.

B. D.

LADIES AGAINST GENTLEMEN.

The following are the teams of the match between Ladies and Gentlemen on April 28th: Ladies—Miss K. Stuart, Miss M. Harrison, Miss Moore, Mrs. F. W. Brown, Mrs. Durlather, Miss Ravenscroft, Miss D. Chambers, Miss Henning-Johnson, Miss E. C. Neville, Miss Barry and Miss V. Hezlet. Gentlemen—H. G. Hutchinson, H. H. Hilton, Captain Hutchison, R. Harris, B. Darwin, V. A. Pollock, C. V. L. Hooman, E. Martin Smith, H. W. Beveridge and A. C. M. Croome.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A LEADED SPIRE THREATENED.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I write to tell you of the possible threatened loss of one of the best examples of leaded spires still left in Essex, viz., on the church of Great Baddow, near Chelmsford. When there a few years ago I roughly conjectured that the spire was fifteenth century, but it may have been renewed later. Whatever its date, it would be disgraceful to lose it. The tower was overgrown with ivy, and I then uttered the warning that it would cause ruin if left; but, unhappily, it was thought too picturesque to remove. My prophecy has now come true. In a gale a few days ago the weathercock was nearly blown down. Mr. Wykeham Chancellor of Chelmsford was called in, and I am told that his report was to the effect that the ivy must go, as it has already damaged some six feet of the top of the tower, and that the spire was in a dangerous state. I now understand that it has been proposed in the place that the spire be demolished and the lead sold to pay the cost of repairing the tower. This mean notion of using the value of the lead to provide for necessary repairs has caused the loss of many another fine example; but I trust that some steps may be taken to prevent Great Baddow being robbed of its delightful spire.—J. CHARLES COX.

PAINT OVER PAINT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The letter from your correspondent "F. G." in last week's COUNTRY LIFE, in which he recommends that old paint should not be taken off before the new is put on, should be accepted only with some reservations. For the treatment of ordinary plain surfaces the advice is good; but before the new paint is applied the old should be thoroughly washed and rubbed down to a smooth surface with pumice-stone and water. If, however, the old paint is blistered, even slightly, it should be burnt off before applying the new. In one direction "F. G.'s" advice seems dangerous. He should have expressly stated that painting over paint is very mischievous when the woodwork is either finely moulded or carved, because with each succeeding coat the sharpness of the work is more and more obliterated. There are, for example, scores of fine old doorheads in London the beauty of which is entirely veiled by the clogging of the carving by generations of painters. In all such cases the paint should be carefully burnt off before the new is applied.—G. C.

THE FORMATION OF DEW-PONDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Mr. Martin's theory and observations in regard to the sloping of the banks of dew-ponds are, I think, quite correct as a preventive of leakage. Some sixty years ago I was told by a very clever marble and stone mason, who worked for me, the trouble he had experienced with the bursting of slate water cisterns, which were then used in Wales and Cheshire, and how he had remedied the mischief by making the cisterns larger at the top than at the bottom, so that when the expansion of the water, in the act of freezing, took place, it simply slid up the sides instead of bursting as heretofore.—THOMAS SHEPHEARD.

MUSICAL SANDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In reference to the article on the above, which appeared in your issue of March 18th, will you kindly allow me to point out that it contains several mis-statements? Your contributor cannot be aware of the existence of my papers on these interesting and once mysterious sands. It is not a fact that the phenomenon has not been satisfactorily explained; not only was this done by

me some years ago, but I was able to produce an artificial musical sand which was exhibited at the Royal Society as far back as 1892!—CECIL CARUS-WILSON.

DISAPPEARING BIRDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I cannot allow your kind reference to my proposal *re* a national sanctuary for our birds to pass without a word of thanks. Indeed, I feel greatly indebted to you for the assistance you have rendered. I wonder whether you are right in supposing that the buzzard, the peregrine, the raven, the chough and the kite are doomed to extinction from causes independent of persecution. A letter received yesterday from the owner of a sanctuary off the Pembrokeshire coasts states that "the buzzard, the peregrine and the raven are increasing, and that last year a pair of choughs nested on one of the islands (he has a little group of four) and reared their young (three), and that the seals are on the increase." It is a very interesting question you have raised, and one that deserves to be enquired into. Ravens pair for life and live to a great age, and it may be that the loss of vitality in the case you mention is due to senile decay. Again, inbreeding may help to explain the threatened extermination of the chough in Cornwall, where some eight or ten pairs only survive.—J. C. TREGARTHEN.

WILD LIFE IN LONDON.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—With reference to your correspondents' letters respecting bird-life in London, perhaps you might think it worthy of note that a robin frequented the churchyard of St. Botolph's, Aldersgate, during the latter part of December, the whole of January, and also the early part of February. Although in the very heart of London, the bright-eyed little visitor appeared quite at home, even fraternising with the sparrows. I have not seen the bird after February, and it is to be hoped that it did not fall a victim to that scourge of London bird-life—the half-wild cat. The wood-pigeon is evident in increasing numbers within the boundary of the City proper. Last spring I watched no fewer than eight performing their love flights over—chimney-pots. In this same oasis of St. Botolph's, perhaps a third of an acre in extent, a couple of young wood-pigeons first saw light last spring, and they fulfilled the best "local" traditions by assuming aldermanic proportions.—W. P. K. NEALE.

THE DISAPPEARING REDSTART.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Having read the letters on the disappearing redstart, perhaps a few notes on the habits of the bird in this district might be of interest. I spent a good few years of my boyhood at a place near the foot of the Lammern Moor Hills in Berwickshire. In spring and summer I passed a lot of time watching the wild birds; for miles around I knew every species that bred in that part by sight, yet I never saw nor heard of the redstart until I came to this place (Selkirkshire) over forty years ago. I can remember the first time I met this beautiful summer visitor as though it were yesterday. Noticing a bird fly from a hole in an old bridge that spans a woodland burn, I put in my hand and took out a small blue egg; six were in the nest. Thinking it was a hedge-sparrow's (although the number of eggs as well as the nesting-place was unusual for that bird), I was turning to go away when I caught sight of a cock redstart perched on top of a blackthorn bush not ten yards from me. I did not know what species of bird he was at the time, but I think when I recall the scene even now that it was one of the prettiest pictures of bird-life I ever saw. His bright colours, the reddish breast, jet black bib, rich chestnut of the rump and tail, and the silvery whiteness of

his crest stood out in strong contrast to the dark foliage of the yew-covered bank. Both birds showed great anxiety when they saw me near the nest; but though I visited them regularly until the young were on the wing, I did not betray their nesting-place to anyone. Although I described the bird to a good many people living in the district, not one of them seemed to know what it was. One old man said it would be a pintail, but he never had seen one himself. As the nestings came I watched every likely place for miles round, but it was six years after when I came upon another pair. Since then I have found them nesting in twelve different places within a radius of six miles. I have never found all these places occupied in one season, but I have found five nests in one year in one or other of them, besides seeing other pairs whose nests I could not find. I am certain these birds were on the increase up till 1905, which was a record year, as I saw at least a dozen pairs in different places and found five nests. I saw a hen bird on March 15th seeking shelter under the eaves of an old mill. There was no mistake about the bird nor the date, as over a dozen persons saw it. I picked up two young ones that had left a nest before they could fly well. Fearing that a cat might get them, I took them home and reared them. They both turned out cocks, but there was a great contrast in their plumage; one was very light in colour, the other darker, with all the markings distinct. The first-mentioned lived six months, the other over two years; but I cannot recommend them as cage-birds, as they are tender, timid, and need a lot of attention. I do not think these birds are decreasing in this district, as I knew four nests in 1910, which is about the average for the last dozen years.—REX.

A UNIQUE CROSS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The enclosed photographs of a hybrid swan and goose may be of interest. This bird is the survivor of two hatched last April, and reared by Mrs. Reynolds of The Priory, Beeston Regis, Sheringham, where it is still alive. I imagine that the cross is unique, and think the occurrence most interesting from an ornithological point of view. I regret that the other and larger bird was killed when quite young;



A HYBRID SWAN AND GOOSE.



A "SWOOSE."

unfortunately it was not preserved. The male bird is a swan. I would suggest that the name of "Swoose" would be a fitting one for this interesting hybrid.—G. DAVEY.

OWLS AND THEIR PREY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was much interested in Mr. J. M. Fielding's letter because I had the same experience this winter. Hundreds of starlings came to roost in my garden laurels, and one evening something disturbed them. It was too dreadful to listen to their cries of agony all night; in fact, it made sleep impossible. I could not understand what caused this agony of mind in hundreds of birds, till, unable to bear the noise any longer, I went out and found two barn-owls taking the birds to a barn, where they ate them; also two goldfinches' wings, etc., were all over the place. The barn and corn-stacks being full of rats, there was no need to kill birds. I have often watched owls searching the hedgerows and garden for birds, evidently preferring them to rats, which abound here. It is impossible to keep tame pigeons on account of owls eating them. There are also two villages near here I can name, and bring witnesses to prove, in which it is impossible to keep pigeons because owls eat them. One was found in a pigeon loft. I think probably owls kill birds in the same manner as they kill rats, by taking out their eyes and making cavities to enable them to pull back the skull and reach the brain. From my own experience I feel certain owls will not eat rats if they can get birds.—T. STUART HAWKINS, Breach Brighton, near Alresford, Hants.

THE DESTRUCTION OF OWLS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I should like to be allowed to add a few remarks in regard to the interesting letters which have appeared in COUNTRY LIFE on the food of owls. From my experience, which extends over a period of twenty years, I should say that it is improbable that the starlings' heads found on a window-sill by Mr. J. M. Fielding were torn off and left there by owls. As a matter of fact, the food of owls and hawks can be determined with more precision and more ease than is the case with almost any others of our native birds. There is no need to quote "authorities" and "experts," it is enough to examine the pellets which these

birds constantly eject. One would have supposed that gamekeepers and game-preservers would possess sufficient knowledge of woodlore to have grasped this source of information, and the number of those who have happily steadily increasing. These pellets are formed of the hair and bones, or feathers and bones, of the prey which has been swallowed, and therefore it is only necessary to collect such pellets and pull them to pieces to discover what victims have been eaten. Wherever owls are not too ruthlessly destroyed these evidences of past dinners can be found by the dozen, and almost invariably are found to be made up of the skulls and limbs of bats, mice, rats, and shrews, packed in a mass of fur. Occasionally the beaks of small finches will be found, which shows that the heads of the birds are eaten, not torn off and left on the ground. I have examined scores of such pellets, and have never yet found the remains of game-birds therein. I have a dozen or so now at the British Museum of Natural History which I shall be pleased to show anyone who feels unconvinced on this point.—W. P. PYCRAFT.

TREES WITH LEGENDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I do not know if a letter upon trees and their stories would be quite suitable for your "Correspondence" columns. We are like children, and sometimes long for mystery. We tire of the main road beaten by many feet, and wander off to the dark, shady lanes on either side hoping to come across something new, something different from high walls, iron seats, guarded trees and receptacles for waste paper! All very well in their way, very tidy, but day after day the same old routine. Let us take this path to the left, briars and wild raspberries ready to trip us up at every step, thorn and beech hedges with many gaping holes leading into meadow or moor, with Queen of the Meadow, white-spotted-leaved angelica and trailing honeysuckle on either side. Let us pass into the forest, stepping over the "thistle" that invites the cedar of Lebanon to come under

its shadow, brush past the glaucous-leaved laurel, with the milk-skinned daphne disappearing, leaving nothing of her whiteness but the ivory-coloured flowers or telling us of its wreaths of victory. We hear "the going on the top of the mulberry trees" as David is led to victory, and the sighing of the aspen quivering beneath her curse. The white Druids with their golden sickle move under the "talking oak" in search of the fatal berry of Balder, and under its purple shadow the angel pouring forth his sacrifice at Ophrah. No need to tell this tree, with Eve hiding behind the stem, Venus near, triumphant, the Gaelic Fruach dying. Oh, fatal tree! whose golden apples are guarded by the Hesperides! The hazel offers you its wonderful divining rods, and as you move upwards the birch tells of the Heavenly Gates. Deborah, dwelling under the palm, looks at us with her prophetic eyes; every sycamore holds a Zachaeus. Before returning to our main road we raise our eyes, and see, apart from the others, three trees so blended together that they seem as one; they are the cedar, the cypress and the pine, the Arbor infelix, whose combined wood was used on "a green hill far away." And as we look we seem to see in its branches the crossbill with its breast blood-stained, hear the "swale, swale" of the swallow, below in the shade the pelican feeding its young with its heart's blood, the flashing to and fro of the peacock, the bird of the Resurrection, the eagle renewing its youth in the sea of regeneration, or, as a symbol of St. John, the sparrows made of clay by the Holy Child, and from the topmost boughs fall the soft cooing of the dove. Do you know the legend of the Cross? How Adam lay a-dying and besought Seth to go to Eden for the fruit of Life? The road was easy to find; he and Eve on their expulsion had left a black track behind them, burnt by their sinful feet. Never again would the green grass cover it; it would always be easily found. So Seth went, and brought three seeds, given by the angel at the gate—the seeds of the cypress, the cedar and pine—and placed them in Adam's mouth. Adam died, but where he lay, wrapped in the skins of wild beasts, on Calvary three trees grew, which centuries after were to be used as the Cross, thought to be in truth the Arbor infelix by his followers, but which became the Arbor vitae to future generation.—C. H. M. JOHNSTONE

THE GAD-WHIP.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In the ancient market town of Caistor (Lines) a curious ceremony took place annually in the church on Palm Sunday. By the observance of this custom certain lands in the parish of Broughton were held. A person from Broughton carrying a large gad-whip (the stock of which was made of willow) entered the north porch during the reading of the First Lesson. After cracking the whip three times at the door he wound the thong round the stock, fastened it with whipcord, and tied to the top of the stock a small purse containing a number of silver pennies. Putting the whip across his shoulders he marched up to the reading-desk, where he stood till the commencement of the Second Lesson, when he waved the purse over the priest's head. Still holding the purse and gad-whip over the priest, he knelt till the Lesson was finished, when he retired. This quaint ceremony was observed till about the middle of the last century.—G. W.

MOSSY WALLS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The walls (plastered) of my house facing north are subject to a mossy vegetation which makes them look very dingy and uncared for. I have had them washed with a prepared distemper colouring, but it does not last for long. Can you kindly tell me of any preparation which would remedy this defect?—E. A.

[It is impossible to answer such a question without personal inspection of the offending walls, but the problem is to get rid of the cause, viz., damp, and the effect, which is the mossy vegetation, will disappear. Possibly the walls have been built without a damp-course, in which case one should be inserted. If, however, there is a damp-course, the flower-beds may have been banked up above its level, and their reduction might get rid of the difficulty.—ED.]

A REMARKABLE INCIDENT ON THE BEAULY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Between certain species of the feathered and piscine tribes constant war is waged, and instances are on record of eagles preying on huge halibut, of the osprey's depredations on various kinds of fish, of the heron's poaching proclivities, as well as of the cormorant's greed in regard to its finny prey. *Vice versa* I know of the case of a salmon having swallowed a young sand marten and afterwards being caught by the same lure; and, of course, everyone is aware of the voraciousness of the pike where waterfowl are concerned. But surely the subjoined incident respecting a cormorant is the most extraordinary one of the kind ever brought to my notice! While an angler was fishing on the Beauly, in Inverness-shire, last week, his gillie shot one of these birds, which seemed to have swallowed something that was causing it trouble. This turned out to be a grilse kelt, which was swallowed all but the tail. The fish was extracted with difficulty, when it was found to weigh over three pounds and to measure twenty-five inches long. I have proved that a cormorant is easily capable of negotiating trout up to one and a-half pounds in weight. But that it should have accounted for the aforesaid fish, or almost accounted for it, seems phenomenal. The bird and its prey were both photographed.—C. J. H. CASSELS.

GREY WAGTAIL IN KENT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The grey wagtail is not a Kentish bird; nevertheless, last summer I photographed the one depicted here just within the border. This pair had built their



THE GREY WAGTAIL

nest in a bank by a little babbling stream, just where it was dammed up to make a small reservoir. If prenatal influences really govern after-events, it is no wonder that these young wagtails should, when their time comes, nest where "Beauty born of murmuring sound" would suggest the surroundings of their own youth, for up to the time when they left the nest no sound could reach them but that of the water as it splashed over the weir.—E. L. TURNER.

MOUSE AND TITMOUSE.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—A very pretty little play has been enacted daily during the last four or five weeks on a cork screen, about twenty feet from my breakfast-room window, between three varieties of tomtits and an old mouse and her young. A coconut, halved, is hung on the screen for the birds, and this year the mouse and her young have shared it with the tomtits! The mouse evidently has a nest somewhere behind the virgin cork, as she always goes into the nut from above. The great tits, when they want to displace the mouse, deliberately peck at her; but she generally holds possession of the nut until her meal is finished. During the last fortnight the baby mice have come, too, and they and the blue tits have rules of the time to take their turns in feeding. I have often seen a great tit and the mouse feeding in the nut together; but I have not once seen the coal tit go anywhere near the nut when the mice are there, although I have many in my garden. Possibly this, which to me is quite a new light, may interest some of your readers who are lovers of Nature.—ANNA E. BUTCHER.

A GAME PUPPY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—This I impart to you "in dreadful secrecy" in the sure faith that you will not give me away to my M.F.H.! I bought the puppy from a shoemaker in a Welsh town through an advertisement in a doggy paper. When he arrived I found him to be fifteen pounds in weight, with long, punishing jaw, the smallest of ears, short coupled and level topped, a trifle on the leg perhaps, and very heavily marked—a terrier proper, all on springs, and with that keen, hard eye which rarely fails to tell, to the terrier man, its own tale. Eleven and a-half months old, with a very short and very hard jacket, he looked, indeed, as Tom Wootton used to say, "bred to murder," a fighter "from his youth upward." On our hunting days he joined my walks abroad, and at once explained to me that he was possessed of a spirit of underground research surprising to find in a man about town. He investigated every hole and drain he came across, and

on several occasions his prolonged absences down wet culverts and drain-pipes caused me much anxiety. I longed exceedingly for a chance to enter him at the "varmint." Everything comes to him who waits, and to me it came in this wise. Circumstances preventing my hunting, I strolled out, late, in the direction of hounds, taking with me my little warrior. I had hardly gone a mile when,



"BRED TO MURDER."

as luck would have it, the cry of hounds was borne down a strong wind to my expectant ears. The music ceased very suddenly, and, full of hope, I broke into a trot, which became a gallop as I saw hounds and field moving off to a fresh draw. Reaching the cavalcade, a friend told me they had just run to ground a few fields back and had left the fox there, and hearing this, temptation assailed me and I fell. Following the horse tracks back, I prospected for that hole, and not in vain. I saw afar off its heaped-up sand, but, far though it was, the puppy had seen it first, and was already halfway there, conveniently deaf to my shouts, for I had had no intention of letting him into a single hole where a bolt would be unlikely and severe punishment, not to be desired for one so young, was more than probable. However, he had settled that question for me, and as I lay, head in hole, I could hear him very busy at his first fox. For a long time the battle raged, and when all my cries and whistles to come out were disregarded and I was beginning to have visions of a night watch, for it was getting late, the deus appeared in the form of the earth-stopper, who had been following the chase. I sent him for spades, and when he returned with the stud-groom of a friend of mine we got to work. The groom proving an expert with the shovel, we soon had a shaft sunk nearly above the field of battle, and reaching in he got a hold of the pup's tail, but could not move him until he got a second hold on his hind legs, and then "pull devil, pull baker" began until, inch by inch, the little sand-covered form came into view. And now from the master of the horse came the shout, "My God, he's got the fox." The little hero had him fast by the side of the nose and upper-jaw, and so they came out together! We had to get a stick into his mouth to enable his enemy to retire in safety, and though it went against the grain to disappoint him of blood, I tied him up. "It do seem a pity"—the words reached me faintly. Turning round I caught the eye of the earth-stopper, and knew that he and I were fellow-sinners in thought; but turning my back on temptation, I marched my little fellow off homewards, despite his frantic efforts to get back again. He is immensely pleased with himself, and has told me the story over and over again in my smoking-room after dinner. It will please showmen to see a photograph of the dog, and to read this puppy's lineage: Sire, Ridal Result, by Ch. Sylvan Result out of Blossom, and dam, Lady R., by Easter Egg out of Morlais Brook Molly.—C. B. M.

A SWISS GOATHERD WITH HIS HORN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—All visitors to Switzerland are familiar with the sound of the mountain horn, though it is rare now for the long horn, such as shown in the photograph,

to be seen or heard near large towns. In villages or outlying districts, though, where the houses are few and far between, it is used as a method of communication from one house to another by certain calls which are understood by the distant neighbours. Smaller horns are used by mountaineers to keep in touch with one another when on long excursions where the party is likely to get separated. Still smaller ones are used on the railways by guards, for the same purpose that guards in this country use whistles. Large horns are used in some districts for calling to church.—HORACE W. NICHOLLS.



THE GOATHERD AND HIS HORN.